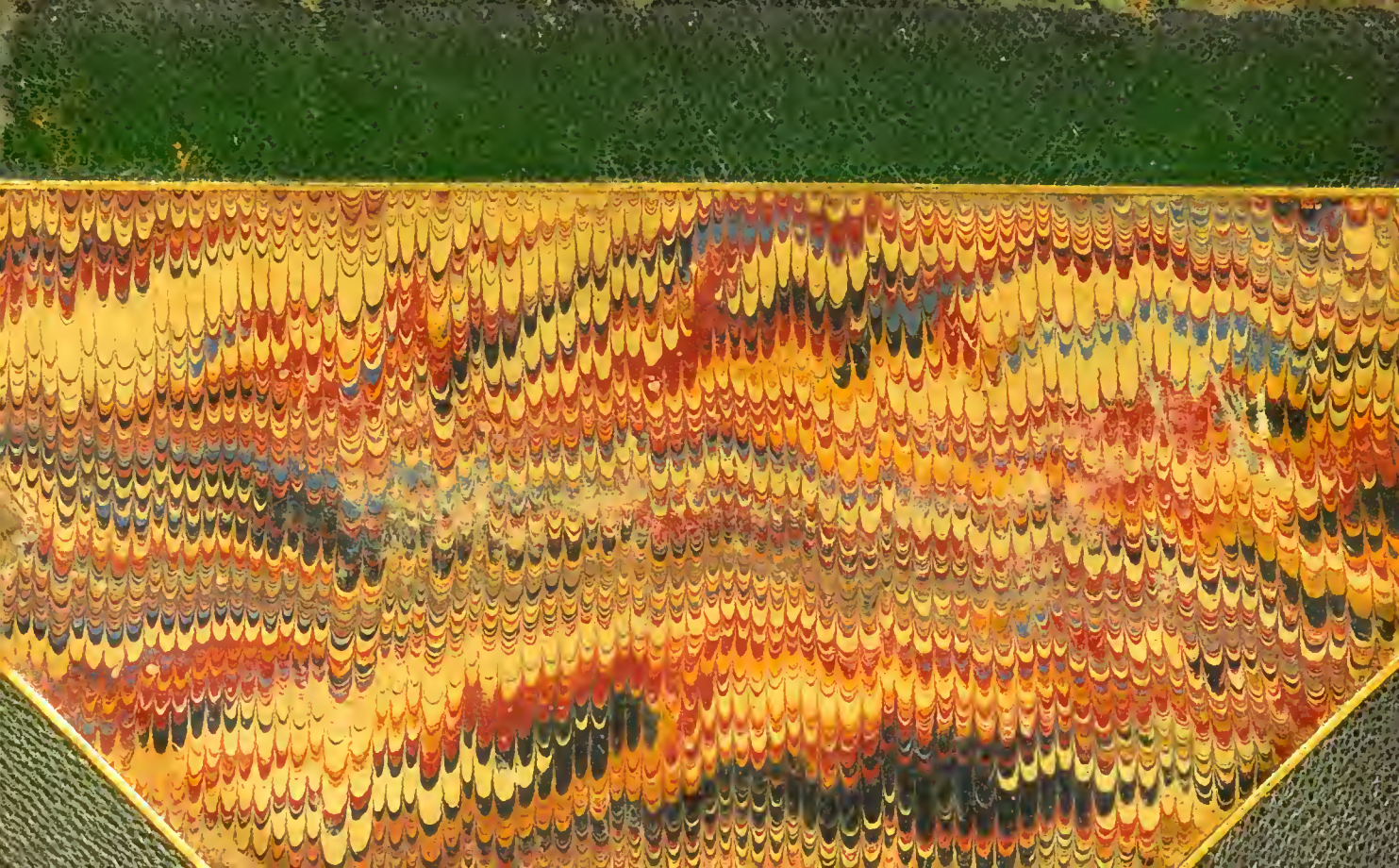
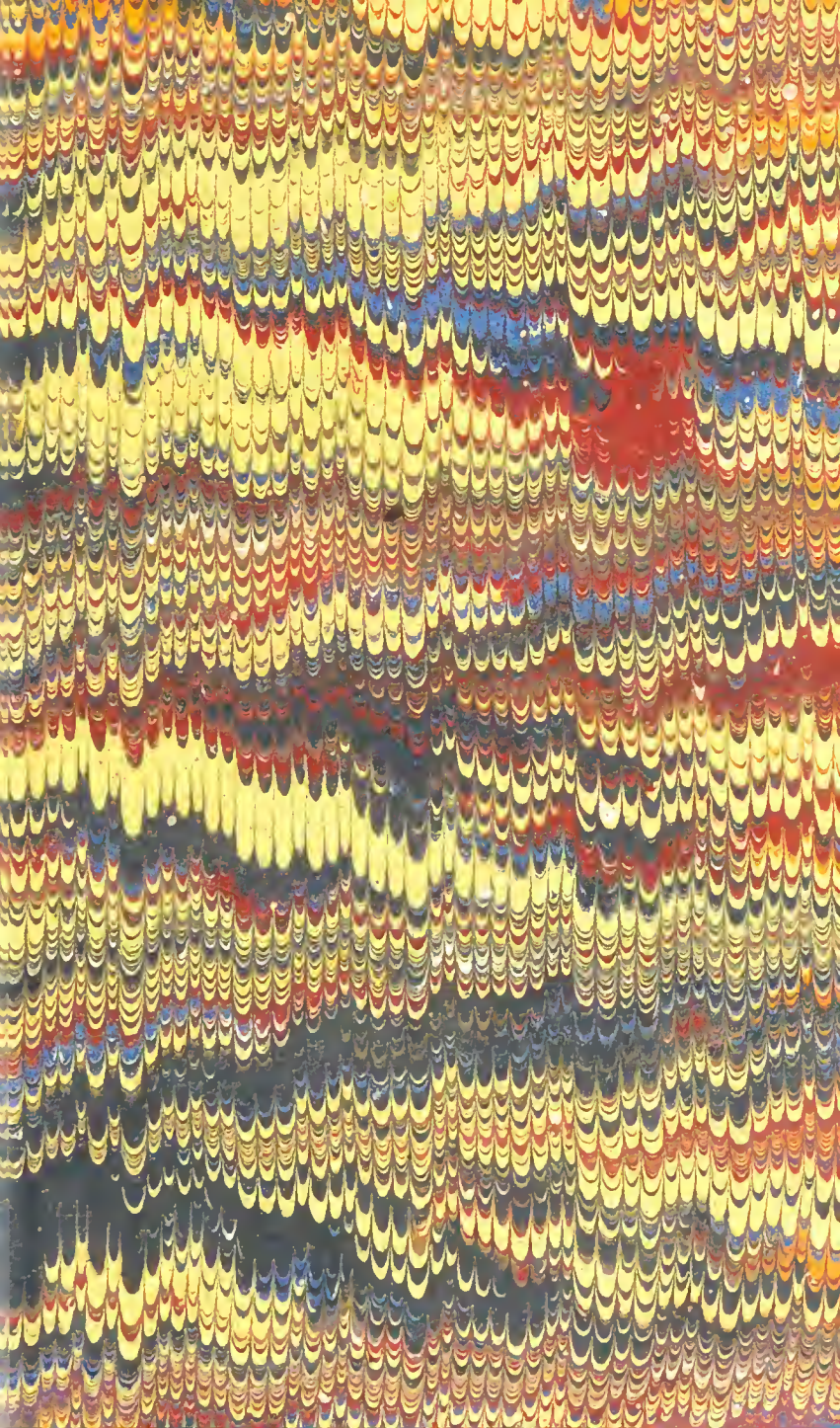






N. W. 19/

SKETCHES

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2015

https://archive.org/details/b2202895x

48461/A



Maud of Gloucester

59132

# SKETCHES

OF

# IMPOSTURE, DECEPTION,

AND

# CREDULITY.

"The earth hath Bubbles, as the water has,
And these are of them."—SHAKSPEARE.

"The prejudice of credulity may, in some measure, be cured by learning to set a high value on truth."—WATTS.

Second Edition.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR THOMAS TEGG, 73, CHEAPSIDE.

MDCCCXL.

LONDON:
BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS TO THE QUEEN,
WHITEFRIARS.



# ADVERTISEMENT.

A COMPLETE history of the subject which occupies these pages would fill an equal number of the ponderous folios over which our ancestors were accustomed to pore. The author of "Sketches of Imposture, Deception, and Credulity," aspires only to give, under various heads, a sample of the manifold frauds which have, in all ages, been successfully employed to frighten and gull mankind. His volume may be considered as a humble supplement to Sir Walter Scott's "Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft," and Sir David Brewster's "Letters on Natural Magic." If it should be found to afford to the Public only a quarter as much amusement and instruction as have been derived from those excellent works, his ambition will be amply gratified.

# CONTENTS.


## CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

PAGE

Effects of Incredulity and Credulity—Knowledge supposed to be Remembrance—Purpose of this Volume—Progress of rational Belief—Resemblance of Error to Truth—Contagious nature of Excitement—Improved State of the Human Mind in Modern Times . . . . . 1

## CHAPTER II.

ON ANCIENT ORACLES, &c.

Remote Origin of Oracles—Influence of Oracles—Opinions respecting them—Cause of the Cessation of Oracles—Superstition early systematized in Egypt—Bœotia early famous for Oracles—Origin of the Oracle of Dodona—Ambiguity of Oracular Responses—Stratagem of a Peasant—Oracles disbelieved by Ancient Philosophers—Cyrus and the Idol Bel—Source of Fire-Worshipping—Victory of Canopus over Fire—the Sphinx—Sounds heard from it—Supposed Cause of them—Mysterious Sounds at Nakous—Frauds of the Priests of Serapis—The Statue of Memnon—Oracle of Delphi—Its Origin—Changes which it underwent—The Pythoness—Danger attendant on her Office—Tricks played by Heathen Priests—Origin of the Gordian Knot—The Knot is cut by Alexander—Ambrosian, Logan or Rocking Stones—Representations of them on Ancient Coins—Pliny's description of a Logan Stone in Asia—Stones at Sitney, in Cornwall, and at Castle Treryn—The latter is overthrown, and replaced—Logan Stones are Druidical Monuments . . . . . 5

## CHAPTER III.

FALSE MESSIAHS, PROPHETS, AND MIRACLES.

PAGE

Susceptibility of the Imagination in the East—Mahomet—His Origin—He assumes the Title of the Apostle of God—Opposition to him—Revelations brought to him by the Angel Gabriel—His Flight to Medina—Success of his Imposture—Attempt to poison him—His Death—Tradition respecting his Tomb—Account of his Intercourse with Heaven—Sabatai Sevi, a false Messiah—Superstitious Tradition among the Jews—Reports respecting the Coming of the Messiah—Sabatai pretends to be the Messiah—He is assisted by Nathan—Follies committed by the Jews—Honours paid to Sabatai—He embarks for Constantinople—His Arrest—He embraces Mahometism to avoid Death—Rosenfeld, a German, proclaims himself the Messiah—His Knavery—He is whipped and imprisoned—Richard Brothers announces himself as the revealed Prince and Prophet of the Jews—He dies in Bedlam—Thomas Muncer and his Associates—Their Fate—Matthias, John of Leyden, and other Anabaptist Leaders—They are defeated and executed—The French Prophets—Punishment of them—Miracles at the Grave of the Deacon Paris—Horrible Self-inflictions of the Convulsionaries—The Brothers of Brugglen—They are executed—Prophecy of a Life-guardsman in London—Joanna Southcott—Her Origin, Progress, and Death—Folly of her Disciples—Miracles of Prince Hohenlohe . . . . . 24

## CHAPTER IV.

ROMAN CATHOLIC SUPERSTITIONS, &c.

Account of Pope Joan—Artifice of Pope Sextus V.—Some Christian Ceremonies borrowed from the Jews and Pagans—Melting of the Blood of St. Januarius—Addison's opinion of it—Description of the Performance of the Miracle—Miraculous Image of Our Saviour at Rome—Ludicrous Metamorphosis of a Statue—Relics—Head of St. John the Baptist—Sword of Balaam—St. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins—Self-Tormenting—Penances of St. Dominic the Cuirassier—The Crusades—Their Cause and Progress, and the immense numbers engaged in them . 55

## CHAPTER V.

HINDOO AND OTHER ORIENTAL SUPERSTITIONS.

PAGE

Gross Superstition of the Hindoo Religion—The Brahmins and their Privileges—Immolation of Widows—Ceremonies and fanatical Sacrifices at Jaggernaut—Pilgrimages to Hurdwar—Sacred Character of the Waters of the Ganges—Follies committed by Hindoo Devotees—Tortures which they inflict on themselves—A Youth induced to sacrifice himself to Bhyroo by a supposed Vision—Mutilation to propitiate the Goddess Kali-Ghat—Wild Superstitions of the Malays—Spirits in which the Malays believe—Pontianaks—Tuju Jindang—The Polong—Mode of exercising the Polong—The Penangalam—Charms to obtain Revenge on Enemies—The Tuju and the Tuju Jantong—The Panaw, a Charm of the Mahometan Malays—Desperate Conduct of a Man who wore a Panaw—Incantations of the Shamans, or Priests, in Siberia . . . . . 67

## CHAPTER VI.

ROYAL IMPOSTORS.

Pretenders to Royalty numerous—Contest between the Houses of York and Lancaster gives rise to various Pretenders—Insurrection of Jack Cade—He is killed—Lambert Simnel is tutored to personate the Earl of Warwick—He is crowned at Dublin—He is taken Prisoner, pardoned, and made Scullion in the Royal Kitchen—Perkin Warbeck pretends to be the murdered Duke of York—He is countenanced by the King of France—He is acknowledged by the Duchess of Burgundy—Perkin lands in Scotland, and is aided by King James—He is married to Lady Catherine Gordon—He invades England, but fails—His Death—Pretenders in Portugal—Gabriel de Spinosa—He is hanged—The Son of a Tiler pretends to be Sebastian—He is sent to the Galleys—Gonçalo Alvarez succeeds him—He is executed—An Individual of Talents assumes the Character of Sebastian—His extraordinary Behaviour in his Examinations—He is given up to the Spaniards—His Sufferings and dignified Deportment—His Fate not known—Pretenders in Russia—

PAGE

The first false Demetrius—He obtains the Throne, but is driven from it by Insurrection, and is slain—Other Impostors assume the same Name—Revolt of Pugatscheff—Pretenders in France—Hervegault and Bruneau assume the Character of the deceased Louis XVII. . . . 83

## CHAPTER VII.

DISGUISES ASSUMED BY, OR IN BEHALF OF, ROYALTY.

Disguise of Achilles—Of Ulysses—Of Codrus—Fiction employed by Numa Pompilius—King Alfred disguised in the Swineherd's Cottage—His Visit, as a Harper, to the Danish Camp—Richard Cœur-de-Lion takes the Garb of a Pilgrim—He is discovered and imprisoned—Disguises and Escape of Mary, Queen of Scots—Escape of Charles the Second, after the Battle of Worcester—Of Stanislaus from Dantzick—Of Prince Charles Edward from Scotland—Peter the Great takes the Dress of a Ship Carpenter—His Visit to England—Anecdote of his Conduct to a Dutch Skipper—Stratagem of the Princess Ulrica of Prussia—Pleasant Deception practised by Catherine the Second of Russia—Joan of Arc—Her early Life—Discovers the King when first introduced at Court—She compels the English to raise the Siege of Orleans—Joan leads the King to be crowned at Rheims—She is taken Prisoner—Base and barbarous Conduct of her Enemies—She is burned at Rouen—The Devil of Woodstock—Annoying Pranks played by it—Explanation of the Mystery—Fair Rosamond . . . 96

## CHAPTER VIII.

MILITARY STRATAGEMS.

Characteristic Mark of a skilful General—Importance anciently attached to military Stratagems—The Stratagem of Joshua at Ai, the first which is recorded—Stratagem of Julius Cæsar in Gaul—Favourable Omen derived from Sneezing—Artifice of Bias at Priene—Telegraphic Communication—Mode adopted by Hystiæus to convey intelligence—Relief of Casilinum by Gracchus—Stratagem of the Chevalier de Luxembourg to convey Ammunition into Lille—Importance of concealing the Death of a General—The manner in

PAGE

which the Death of Sultan Solyman was kept secret—Stratagem of John Visconti—Stratagem of Lord Norwich at Angoulême—Capture of Amiens by the Spaniards—Manner in which the Natives of Sonia threw off the Yoke . 122

## CHAPTER IX.

MALINGERING, OR SIMULATION OF DISEASES.

Former Prevalence of Malingering in the Army; and the Motive for it—Decline of the Practice—Where most prevalent—The means of Simulation reduced to a System—Cases of simulated Ophthalmia in the 50th Regiment—The Deception wonderfully kept up by many Malingerers—Means of Detection—Simulated Paralysis—Impudent Triumph manifested by Malingerers—Curious case of Hollidge—Gutta Serena, and Nyctalopia counterfeited—Blind Soldiers employed in Egypt—Cure, by actual cautery, of a Malingerer—Simulation of Consumption and other Diseases—Feigned Deafness—Detection of a Man who simulated Deafness—Instances of Self-mutilation committed by Soldiers—Simulation of Death . . . . 131

## CHAPTER X.

MISCELLANEOUS IMPOSTORS AND IMPOSTURES.

Mary Tofts, the Rabbit Breeder, of Godalming—Progress and Detection of her Impostures—Poisoning of St. André—The Bottle Conjuror—Advertisements on this Occasion—Riot produced by the Fraud—Squibs and Epigrams to which it gave rise—Case of Elizabeth Canning—Violent Controversy which arose out of it—She is found guilty of Perjury, and transported—The Cock Lane Ghost—Public Excitement occasioned by it—Detection of the Fraud—Motive for the Imposture—The Stockwell Ghost—The Sampford Ghost—Mystery in which the Affair was involved—Astonishing Instance of Credulity in Perigo and his Wife—Diabolical Conduct of Mary Bateman—She is hanged for Murder—Metamorphosis of the Chevalier d'Eon—Multifarious Disguises of Price, the Forger—Miss Robertson—The Fortunate Youth—The Princess Olive—Caraboo—Pretended Fasting—Margaret Senfrit—Catherine Binder—The Girl of Unna—The Osnaburg Girl—Anne Moore . . . . 140

## CHAPTER XI.

LITERARY IMPOSTURES AND DISGUISES.

PAGE

Controversy respecting the works of Homer; Arguments of the Disputants—Controversy on the supposed Epistles of Phalaris—Opinion of Sir William Temple on the Superiority of the Ancients—Dissertation of Dr. Bentley on the Epistles of Phalaris—He proves them to be a Forgery—Doubts as to the Anabasis being the work of Xenophon—Arguments of Mr. Mitford in the Affirmative—Alcyonius accused of having plagiarised from, and destroyed, Cicero's Treatise "De Gloria"—Curious Mistake as to Sir T. More's Utopia—The Icon Basilike—Disputes to which it gave rise—Arguments, pro and con. as to the real Author of it—Lauder's Attempt to prove Milton a Plagiarist—Refutation of him by Dr. Douglas—His Interpolations—George Psalmanazar—His Account of Formosa—His Repentance and Piety—Publication of Ossian's Poems by Mr. Macpherson—Their Authenticity is doubted—Report of the Highland Society on the Subject—Pseudonymous and anonymous Works—Letters of Junius—The Drapier's Letters—Tale of a Tub—Gulliver's Travels—The Waverley Novels—Chatterton and the Rowley Poems—W. H. Ireland and the Shakspearian Forgeries—Damberger's pretended Travels—Poems of Clotilda de Surville—Walladmor—Hunter, the American—Douville's Travels in Africa . . . . . 163

## CHAPTER XII.

MASTERPIECES AND DECEPTIONS IN PAINTING AND SCULPTURE.

Early Practice of Painting and Sculpture—Deception not the purpose of Painting—Deceptive Powers of early Painters: Zeuxis, Parrhasius, Apelles, and Protogenes—Anecdote of Vandyke and Frank Hals—Apelles and the shoemaking Critic—Apelles at Alexandria—Instances of the Skill of Apelles and Parrhasius, and of some modern Artists—Effects of Chance in Painting—Origin of the Corinthian Capital—Origin of Gothic Architecture—Admirable Copy of Raphael by Del Sarto—Imitative Powers of Sebastian Ricci; Speech

PAGE

of La Fosse to him—Ingenious Stratagem of Lord Northwick—Laughable Cheat by Mabuse—Superstitious Stories respecting Pictures—Presentation Picture by Rubens—Juan de Pereja, the Mulatto Slave of Velasquez—Picture-dealing; Tricks of Picture-dealers—Secret of the Venetian Style of Colouring—Anecdote of a Picture Collector—Originals mistaken for Copies—Imitations of Painting—The Polygraphic Society—Mosaic—Mexican Feather Pictures—Stratagem of an Architect—Michael Angelo's Cupid—Statue of Charles I.; of Charles II. . . 209

## CHAPTER XIII.

### IMPOSTURES IN ENGRAVING.

Fashion of decrying modern Artists—M. Picart asserts the Merit of modern Engravers—Means employed by him to prove the Truth of his Assertions—"The Innocent Impostors"—Goltzius imitates perfectly the Engravings of Albert Durer—Marc Antonio Raimondi is equally successful—Excellent Imitation of Rembrandt's Portrait of Burgomaster Six—Modern Tricks played with respect to Engraved Portraits—Sir Joshua Reynolds metamorphosed into "The Monster" . . . . . 232

## CHAPTER XIV.

### FORGED INSCRIPTIONS AND SPURIOUS MEDALS.

Ancient Memorials of Geographical Discoveries—Mistakes arising from them—Frauds to which they gave occasion—Imposture of Evemerus—Annius of Viterbo wrongfully charged with forging Inscriptions—Spurious Works given to the World by him—Forged Inscriptions put on Statues by ignorant modern Sculptors—Spurious Medals—Instances of them in the Cabinet of Dr. Hunter—Coins adulterated by Grecian Cities—Evelyn's Directions for ascertaining the Genuineness of Medals—Spurious Gold Medals—Tricks of the Manufacturers of Pseudo-Antique Medals—Collectors addicted to pilfering Rarities—Medals swallowed by Vaillant—Mistakes arising from Ignorance of the Chinese Characters . . . . . 235

## CHAPTER XV.

SEPULCHRAL AND PERPETUAL LAMPS.

PAGE

Belief in ever-burning sepulchral Lamps—Such Lamps supposed to have originated with the Egyptians—Reason of their Origin—Various Shapes of Egyptian Lamps—Description of one—Lamp said to have been found in the Tomb of Pallas—Its unextinguishable nature—Lamp and embalmed Body mentioned by Pancirollus—Observation of Ferrarius—Perpetual Lamps in the Temple of Jupiter Ammon, and at Edessa—Kircher on the Formation of Perpetual Lamps—Trithemius's Recipes to make them—Why such Lamps were supposed to be possible in Egypt—Sir Thomas Browne's Conjectures respecting them—Modern Philosophers anxious to form Perpetual Lamps—Suggestions of Dr. Plott respecting the Method of making them . . . . 241

## CHAPTER XVI.

PANTOMIMIC DELUSIONS.

The Art of Mimicry in ancient and modern Times—Superiority of the Ancients in that Art—Advice given by Periander—Fable of Proteus—Education required by a Professor of the Pantomimic Art—Herodotus—Personation of the insane Ajax—Timocrates—Archimimes employed at Funerals—Demetrius the Cynic converted—Striking Effect of Pantomime on two Barbarian Princes—Pleasure felt by the Roman People on the Recal of Bathyllus—Contest of Bathyllus and Hylas—Anecdote of John Kemble—Pantomime in Italy—Acting of Portraits and historical Pictures in Italy—The Harlot's Progress represented as a Pantomime—War Dances of the American Indians . . . . . 248

## CHAPTER XVII.

MYSTERY OF THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK.

The Man with the Iron Mask proved to be Matthioli—Who Matthioli was—He is bribed by Louis XIV. to obtain the Surrender of Casale—He violates his Engagement with the French Monarch—Louis resolves to take Vengeance on him

PAGE

—Matthioli is lured into the Hands of the French Agents—He is made Prisoner—Instructions given by Louis, relative to the Treatment of the Prisoner—Matthioli is compelled to wear a Mask—A mad Jacobin Monk is confined with him—He is removed to Exilles—Again removed to the Island of St. Margaret—Manner in which he travelled—Anecdotes respecting him—He is again removed to the Bastile—His Death—Precautions taken after his Death to preserve Secrecy . . . . . 254

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE SOUTH SEA BUBBLE.

General Infatuation with respect to the South Sea Bubble—Literary Men caught the Infection—Gay, the Poet, loses all his Property—Chandler is ruined, and forced to become a Bookseller—Origin of the South Sea Scheme—The House of Lords is hostile to it—Difference of the South Sea and Mississippi Schemes—Lying Reports spread by Sir John Blunt, to raise the Price of Stock—Consequence of them—Change-alley is crowded by all Classes—Numerous Bubbles—Ludicrous Impudence of some of them—Downfall of the South Sea Scheme—Escape of Knight, the Treasurer—Bribes to Members of the Administration, &c.—Parliamentary Measures against the Guilty—The Bubbles put down by Proclamation—Sir R. Steele's Multiplication Table—Speculations in 1825 . . . . 261

## CHAPTER XIX.

### ATTEMPT TO STEAL THE REGALIA FROM THE TOWER.

First Opening of the Regalia to Public Inspection—Edwards appointed Keeper—Plan formed by Blood to steal the Regalia—He visits the Tower with his pretended Wife—Means by which he contrived to become intimate with Edwards—His Arrangements for carrying his Scheme into Execution—He knocks down Edwards, and obtains Possession of the Jewels—Fortunate Chance by which his Scheme was frustrated—He is taken—Charles II. is present at his Examination—Blood contrives to obtain a Pardon, and the Gift of an Estate from the King . . . . 270

## CHAPTER XX.

### VAMPYRISM.

PAGE

Horrible nature of the Superstition of Vampyrism—Persons attacked by Vampyres become Vampyres themselves—Signs by which a Vampyre was known—Origin of one of the signs—Effect attributed to Excommunication in the Greek church—Story of an excommunicated Greek—Calmet's theory of the origin of the Superstition respecting Vampyres—St. Stanislas—Philimnium—The Strygis supposed to have given the idea of the Vampyre—Capitulary of Charlemagne—Remedy against attacks from the Demon—Anecdote of an impudent Vampyre—Story of a Vampyre at Mycone—Prevalence of Vampyrism in the north of Europe—Walachian mode of detecting Vampyres . . . . . 273

## CHAPTER XXI.

### JUGGLING.

Feats of Jugglers formerly attributed to Witchcraft—Extract from Ady's Candle in the Dark—Anglo-Saxon Gleemen—Norman Jugglers or Tregetours—Chaucer's Description of the Wonders performed by them—Means probably employed by them—Receipe for making the Appearance of a Flood—Jugglers fashionable in the Reign of Charles II.—Evelyn's Account of a Fire-eater—Katterfelto—Superiority of Asiatic and Egyptian pretenders to magical Skill—Mandeville's Account of Juggling at the Court of the Great Khan—Extraordinary Feats witnessed by the Emperor Jehanguire—Ibn Batuta's Account of Hindustanee Jugglers—Account of a Brahmin who sat upon the Air—Egyptian Jugglers—Mr. Lane's Account of the Performance of one of them—Another fails in satisfying Captain Scott . . . . 280

## CHAPTER XXII.

### PRODIGIES.

Hold taken on the Public Mind by Prodigies—Dutch Boy with Hebrew Words on the Iris of each Eye—Boy with the word Napoleon in the Eye—Child with a Golden Tooth—Speculations on the subject—Superstition respecting changeling Children in the Isle of Man—Waldron's Description

PAGE

of a Changeling—Cases of extraordinary Sleepers—The Seven Sleepers of Ephesus—Men supposed, in the northern Regions to be frozen during the Winter, and afterwards thawed into Life again—Dr. Oliver's Case of a Sleeper near Bath—Dr. Cheyne's Account of Colonel Townshend's power of voluntarily suspending Animation—Man buried alive for a Month at Jaisulmer—The Manner of his Burial, and his Preparation for it . . . . 290

## CHAPTER XXIII.

BOTANICAL SUPERSTITIONS AND DELUSIONS.

Botanical Absurdities numerous—Shepherds study the Nature of Plants—The Doctrine of Signatures described—Supposed Qualities of Plants, according to that doctrine—Maidenhair, Quinces, Balm, Woodsorrel, Walnut—The Shamrock an Emblem of the Trinity—Method of gathering and digging up Plants—Veneration in which the Mistetoe was held—Fern-seed rendered the Bearer invisible—The Enchanter's Nightshade—The Mandrake—Mode of obtaining it—The Mandrake mentioned in Genesis—Pliny's Mention of it—The Root counterfeited by means of the Briony Root—Its soporific Virtues—The Tartarian Lamb, or Barometz, described—Poetical Descriptions of it by De la Croix and Darwin—Holy Trees—Early-budding Oaks in the New Forest—Glastonbury Thorn—Miraculous Walnut Tree at Glastonbury—Early Blackthorn at Quainton—The Groaning Tree at Badesly—Hazel used for the Divining Rod—Vindication of the Belief in the Divining Rod—Various Superstitions respecting Trees and Plants—The Peridexion. 299

## CHAPTER XXIV.

THE DELUSIONS OF ALCHEMY.

Origin of Alchemy—Argument for Transmutation—Golden Age of Alchemy—Alchemists in the 13th century—Medals metaphorically described—Jargon of Dr. Dee—The Green Lion—Roger Bacon—Invention of Gunpowder—Imprisonment of Alchemists—Edict of Henry VI.—Pope John XXII.—Pope Sixtus V.—Alchemy applied to Medicine—Paracelsus—Evelyn's hesitation about Alchemy—Narrative of Helvetius—Philadept on Alchemy—Rosicrucians—A Vision—Haydon's description of Rosicrucians—Dr. Price—Mr. Woulfe—Mr. Kellerman . . . . . 314

## CHAPTER XXV.

ASTROLOGY.

PAGE

Supposed Origin of Astrology—Butler on the Transmission of Astrological Knowledge—Remarks on Astrology by Hervey—Petrarch's Opinion of Astrology—Catherine of Medicis—Casting of Nativities in England—Moore's Almanack—Writers for and against Astrology—Horoscope of Prince Frederick of Denmark—Astrologers contributed sometimes to realize their own Predictions—Caracalla—Mr. Turner—Woman who foretold, from a Portrait, the time when the Original would die—Stiff the Fortune Teller and his foolish Pupil—Expulsion of the Cholera from Jaypore—Cingalese Astrological Instructions . . 331

## CHAPTER XXVI.

MEDICAL DELUSIONS AND FRAUDS.

State of Medicine in remote Ages—Animals Teachers of Medicine—Gymnastic Medicine—Cato's Cure for a Fracture—Dearness of Ancient Medicines and Medical Books—Absurdity of the Ancient Materia Medica: Gold, Bezoar, Mummy—Prescription for a Quartan—Amulets—Virtues of Gems—Corals—Charms—Charm for Sore Eyes—Medicine connected with Astrology—Cure by Sympathy—Sir Kenelm Digby—The real Cause of the Cure—The Vulnerary Powder, &c.—The Royal Touch—Evelyn's Description of the Ceremony—Valentine Greatrakes—Morley's Cure for Scrofula—Inoculation—Vaccination—Dr. Jenner—Animal Magnetism—M. Loewe's Account of it—Mesmer, and his Feats—Manner of Magnetizing—Report of a Commission on the Subject—Metallic Tractors—Baron Silfverkielm and the Souls in white Robes—Mr. Loutherbourg—Empirics—Uroscopy—Mayersback—Le Febre—Remedies for the Stone—The Anodyne Necklace—The Universal Medicine—Conclusion . . . . 342

# SKETCHES

OF

# IMPOSTURE, DECEPTION,

AND

# CREDULITY.

## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

Effects of Incredulity and Credulity—Knowledge supposed to be Remembrance—Purpose of this Volume—Progress of rational Belief—Resemblance of Error to Truth—Contagious nature of Excitement—Improved State of the Human Mind in Modern Times.

Incredulity has been said, by Aristotle, to be the foundation of all wisdom. The truth of this assertion might safely be disputed; but, on the other hand, to say that credulity is the foundation of all folly, is an assertion more consonant to experience, and may be more readily admitted: and the contemplation of this subject forms a curious chapter in the history of the human mind.

A certain extent of credulity, or, more properly, belief, may, indeed, be considered as absolutely necessary to the well-being of social communities; for universal scepticism would be universal distrust. Nor could knowledge ever have arrived at its present

amazing height, had every intermediate step in the ladder of science, from profound ignorance and slavery of intellect, been disputed with bigoted incredulity.

It has been said that all knowledge is remembrance, and all ignorance forgetfulness,—alluding to the universal knowledge which, in the opinion of the schoolmen, our first father, Adam, possessed *before the fall*,—and that the subsequent invention of arts and sciences was only a partial recovery or recollection, as it were, of what had been originally well known. The undefined aspirations of many minds, to seek for what is distant and least understood, in preference to that near at hand and more in unison with our general state of knowledge, seem to favour this idea.

It will be the endeavour of the following pages to show that the credulity of the many—in some cases synonymous with the foolish—has been, from the beginning, most readily imposed upon by the clever and designing few. It is a curious task to investigate the gradual development of rational belief, as exhibited in the proportionate disbelief and exposure of those things which, in earlier ages, were considered points of faith, and to doubt which was a dangerous heresy; and how, at first, the arts and sciences were weighed down, and the advantages to be derived from them neutralised, by the fallacies of misconception or fanaticism. We are, in spite of ourselves, the creatures of imagination, and the victims of prejudice, which has been justly called the wrong bias of the soul, that effectually keeps it from coming near the path of truth; a task the more difficult to accomplish, since error often bears so near a resemblance to it. Error, indeed, always borrows something of truth, to make her more acceptable to the world, seldom appearing in her

native deformity; and the subtilty of grand deceivers has always been shown in grafting their greatest errors on some material truths, and with such dexterity, that Ithuriel's spear alone, whose touch

"no falsehood can endure,"

would have power to reveal them.

Many, and even contradictory, causes might be assigned for the constant disposition towards credulity; the mind is prone to believe that for which it most anxiously wishes; difficulties vanish in *desire*, which thus becomes frequently the main cause of success. Thus, when Prince Henry, *believing* his father dead, had taken the crown from his pillow, the King in reproach said to him,*

"Thy *wish* was father, Harry, to that thought."

Belief is often granted on trust to such things as are above common comprehension, by some, who would thus flatter themselves with a superiority of judgment; on the other hand, what all around put faith in, the remaining few will, from that circumstance, easily believe. This is seen in times of popular excitement, when an assertion, quite at variance with common sense or experience, will run like a wild-fire through a city, and be productive of most serious results. It would appear that this springs from that inherent power of imitation, which is singularly exemplified even in particular kinds of disease,—comitial, as they were called by the Romans, from their frequent occurrence in assemblies of the people,—and, more fatally, when it impels us to "follow a multitude to do evil."

* Second Part of King Henry IV.

After a long and dreary period of ignorance, the nations of Europe began to arouse themselves from the lethargy in which they had been plunged: *religious enthusiasm then awakened the ardour of heroism*, and the wild but fascinating spirit of chivalry —whose actions were the offspring of disinterested valour, that looked for no reward but the smile of favouring beauty or grateful tear of redressed misfortune,—taught the world, that humanity and benevolence were no less meritorious than undaunted courage and athletic strength.

Knowledge, however, advanced with slow and timid steps from the cells of the monks, in which she had been obliged to conceal herself, whilst her rival, Ignorance, had been exalted to palaces and thrones. From the period which succeeded that twilight of the Goths and Vandals, when all the useful arts were obscured and concealed by indolent indifference, we shall find that each succeeding age happily contributed to enlighten the world by the revival and gradual improvement of the arts and sciences; a corresponding elevation in the general sagacity of the human mind was the natural consequence: this can readily be shown by the proportionate decrease of the numerous methods by which specious impostors lived upon the credulity of others.

Few, it is to be hoped, in the present day seek consolation for disappointment in the mysteries of astrological judgments, or attribute their ill success in life to an evil conjunction of the stars, as revealed by the deluding horoscope of a caster of nativities.

That age has at length passed away, when the search after the philosopher's stone, or the universal solvent, terminated a life of incredible toil and hopeless expectation, in poverty and contempt. But there

are still many, who neglect the experience of the past, and, anxious to know their future fate, seek it in the fortune-teller's cards; or, unhappily, a prey to some of those ills that flesh is heir to, would rather seek to expedite their cure by some specious but empirical experiment, than wait for the slower but surer results of time and experience.

---

## CHAPTER II.

### ON ANCIENT ORACLES, &c.

Remote Origin of Oracles—Influence of Oracles—Opinions respecting them—Cause of the Cessation of Oracles—Superstition early systematized in Egypt—Bœotia early famous for Oracles—Origin of the Oracle of Dodona—Ambiguity of Oracular Responses—Stratagem of a Peasant—Oracles disbelieved by Ancient Philosophers—Cyrus and the Idol Bel—Source of Fire-Worshipping—Victory of Canopus over Fire—the Sphinx—Sounds heard from it—Supposed Cause of them—Mysterious Sounds at Nakous—Frauds of the Priests of Serapis—The Statue of Memnon—Oracle of Delphi—Its Origin—Changes which it underwent—The Pythoness—Danger attendant on her Office—Tricks played by Heathen Priests—Origin of the Gordian Knot—The Knot is cut by Alexander—Ambrosian, Logan or Rocking Stones—Representations of them on Ancient Coins—Pliny's description of a Logan Stone in Asia—Stones at Sitney, in Cornwall, and at Castle Treryn—The latter is overthrown, and replaced—Logan Stones are Druidical Monuments.

The knowledge of the origin of the ancient oracles is lost in the distance of time; yet it seems reasonable to suppose, that traditionary accounts and confused recollections of the revelations graciously vouchsafed to Noah, to Abraham, and the Patriarchs, more especially Moses, may have been the foundation of these oracles, which were venerated in ancient times; and established in temples, which were, in some

instances, supposed to be even the abode of the gods themselves: thus Apollo was supposed to take up his occasional residence at Delphos, Diana at Ephesus, and Minerva at Athens.

The manner of prophecy was various, but that employed by oracles enjoyed the greatest repute; because they were believed to proceed, in a most especial manner, from the gods themselves. Every thing of essential consequence being, therefore, referred to them by the heads of states, oracles obtained a powerful influence over the minds of the people; and this popular credulity offered tempting opportunities to the priests for carrying on very lucrative impostures, nor did they disdain or neglect to take advantage of those opportunities. Added to this, the different functions of the gods, and the different and often opposite parts which they were made to take in human affairs by the priests and poets, were plentiful sources of superstitious rites, and therefore of emolument to those who, in consequence either of office or pretension, were supposed to have immediate communications with the deity in whose temples they presided.

Much has been written on this subject; and some have even gone so far as to suppose that Divine permission was granted to certain demons, or evil spirits, to inhabit pagan shrines, and thence, by ambiguous answers, to deceive, and often to punish, those who sought by their influence to read the forbidden volume of futurity.

This doctrine was strenuously opposed by Van Dale; and Mœbius (of Leipsic), although opposed to Van Dale's opinion, allows that oracles did not cease to grant responses *immediately* at the coming of Christ; and this has been considered a sufficient

proof as well as argument, that demons did not deliver oracular responses; but that those responses were impostures and contrivances of the priests themselves.

The true cause of the cessation of oracular prophecy, however, appears to be, that the minds of men became enlightened by the wide spreading of the Christian faith; and by the circumstance, that their superstition was compromised by the metamorphoses of their favourite heroes and deities into saints and martyrs. As an instance of which, it will hereafter be shown, that the statues of the ancient gods, even to this day, are allowed to stand and hold places in the churches and cathedrals of many catholic countries.

Those who argue that oracles *ceased* immediately at the coming of Christ, relate, in confirmation of their opinion, that Augustus having grown old, became desirous of choosing a successor, and went, in consequence, to consult the oracle at Delphos. No answer was given, at first, to his inquiry, though he had spared no expense to conciliate the oracle. At last, however, the priestess is reported to have said, "The Hebrew Infant, to whom all gods render obedience, chases me hence; He sends me to the lower regions; therefore depart this temple, without speaking more."

Superstition was formed into a system in Egypt at an age prior to our first accounts of that country. Vast temples were built, and innumerable ceremonies established; the same body, forming the hereditary priesthood and the nobility of the nation, directed with a high hand the belief and consciences of the people; and prophecy was not only among their pretensions, but perhaps the most indispensable part of their office.

Bœotia was also a country famous for the number

of its oracles, and from its localities was well suited for such impostures, being mountainous and full of caverns, by means of which sounds and echoes, apparently mysterious, could be easily multiplied to excite the astonishment and terror of the supplicants.

Herodotus informs us that one of the first oracles in Greece was imported from the Egyptian Thebes. It happened, says Mr. Mitford, in his History of Greece, that the master of a Phenician vessel carried off a woman, an attendant of the temple of Jupiter, at Thebes on the Nile, and sold her in Thesprotia, a mountainous tract in the north-western part of Epirus, bordering on the Illyrian hordes. Reduced thus unhappily to slavery among barbarians, the woman, however, soon became sensible of the superiority which her education in a more civilised country gave her over them; and she conceived hopes of mending her condition by practising upon their ignorance what she had acquired of those arts which able hands imposed upon a more enlightened people. She gave out that she possessed all the powers of prophecy to which the Egyptian Priests pretended; that she could discover present secrets, and foretel future events.

Her pretensions excited curiosity, and brought numbers to consult her. She chose her station under the shade of a spreading oak, where, in the name of the god Jupiter, she delivered answers to her ignorant inquirers; and shortly her reputation as a prophetess extended as far as the people of the country themselves communicated.

These simple circumstances of her story were afterwards, according to the genius of those ages, turned into a fable, which was commonly told, in the time of Herodotus, by the Dodonæan priests. A black pigeon, they said, flew from Thebes in Egypt to

Dodona, and, perching upon an oak, proclaimed with human voice, "that an oracle of Jupiter should be established there." Concluding that a divinity spoke through the agency of the pigeon, the Dodonæans obeyed the mandate, and the oracle was established. The historian accounts for the fiction thus: the woman on her arrival speaking in a foreign dialect, the Dodonæans said she spoke like a pigeon; but afterwards, when she had acquired the Grecian speech and accent, they said the pigeon spoke with a human voice.

The trade of propheey being both easy and lucrative, the office of the prophetess was readily supplied both with associates and successors. A temple for the deity and habitations for his ministers were built; and thus, according to the evidently honest, and apparently well-founded and judicious, account of Herodotus, arose the oracle of Jupiter at Dodona, the very place where tradition, still remaining to the days of that writer, testified that sacrifices had formerly been performed only to the nameless god.

The responses of the oracles, though given with some appearance of probability, were for the most part ambiguous and doubtful; but it must be acknowledged that the priests were very clever persons, since, while they satisfied for the time the wishes of others, they were so well able to conceal their own knavery. A fellow, it is said, willing to try the truth of Apollo's oracle, asked what it was he held in his hand—holding at the time a sparrow under his cloak—and whether it was dead or alive—intending to kill or preserve it, contrary to what the oracle should answer—but it replied, that it was in his own choice whether that which he held should live or die.

Many of the sages and other great men evidently paid no regard, or real veneration, to the oracles,

beyond what policy dictated to preserve their influence over others.

The researches of modern antiquaries and travellers have discovered the machinery of many artifices of the priests of the now deserted fanes, which sufficiently account for the apparent miracles exhibited to the eye of ignorance. There remain many instances of this kind to show how general this system of imposture has been in all ages; and, as may be supposed, the priests did not fail to exact a liberal payment in advance.

Cyrus,—according to the apocryphal tradition,—a devout worshipper of the idol Bel, was convinced by the prophet Daniel of the imposture of this supposed mighty and living god, who was thought to consume every day twelve measures of fine flour, forty sheep, and six vessels of wine, which were placed as an offering on the altar. These gifts being presented as usual, Daniel commanded ashes to be strewed on the floor of the temple, round the altar on which the offerings were placed; and the door of the temple to be sealed in the presence of the king. Cyrus returned on the following day, and seeing the altar cleared of what was placed thereon, cried out "Great art thou, O Bel, and in thee is no deceit!" but Daniel pointing to the floor, the king continues, "I see the footsteps of women and children!" The private door at the back of the altar leading to the dwellings of the priests was then discovered; their imposture clearly proved, they were all slain, and the temple was destroyed.

The circumstance of fire being so frequently an object of veneration amongst pagans, is thought to have arisen thus: the sun, as a source of light and heat, was the most evident and most benignant of the

natural agents; and was worshipped, accordingly, as a first cause, rather than as an effect; as however it was occasionally absent, it was typified by fire, which had the greatest analogy to it.

This element, first respected only as the representative of the sun, in time became itself the object of adoration among the Chaldeans; and Eusebius relates the following circumstance with respect to it. The Chaldeans asserted that their god was the strongest and most powerful of all gods; since they had not met with any one that could resist his force; so that whenever they happened to seize upon any deities, which were worshipped by other nations, they immediately threw them into the fire, which never failed of consuming them to ashes, and thus the god of the Chaldeans came to be publicly looked upon as the conqueror of all other gods: at length a priest of Canopus, one of the Egyptian gods, found out the means to destroy the great reputation which fire had acquired. He caused to be formed an idol of a very porous earth, with which pots were commonly made to purify the water of the Nile; the belly of this statue, which was very capacious, was filled with water, the priest having first made a great many little holes and stopped them with wax. He then challenged the fire of the Chaldeans to dispute with his god Canopus. The Chaldeans immediately prepared one, and the Egyptian priest set his statue on it; no sooner did the fire reach the wax than it dissolved, the holes were opened, the water passed through, and the fire was extinguished. Upon this a report was soon spread, that the god Canopus had conquered and destroyed the god of the Chaldeans. As a memorial of their victory, the Egyptians always afterwards made their idols with very large bellies.

The celebrated sphinx, still more interesting as a wonderful production of art, is said to have been made by an Egyptian king, in memory of Rhodope of Corinth, with whom he was passionately in love: yet it was subsequently considered as an oracle, which, if consulted at the rising of the sun, gave prophetic answers. There has lately been discovered a large hole in the head; in which the priests are supposed to have concealed themselves, for the purpose of deluding the people. At sunrise music was said to be heard. The latter might even occur from natural causes. Messieurs Jomard, Jollois, and Devilliers heard at *sunrise*, in a monument of granite, placed in the centre of that spot on which the palace of Karnak stood, a noise resembling that of a string breaking; this was found on attentive examination to proceed from a natural phenomenon, occurring near the situation of the sphinx. Of this circumstance the ingenuity of the priests would no doubt be sure to avail themselves; and this may also account for the hour of sunrise being chosen for the oracular responses.

To confirm the probability of this solution of the mystery, it may be mentioned that Baron Humboldt was informed by most credible witnesses, that subterranean sounds, like those of an organ, are heard towards sunrise by those who sleep upon the granite rocks on the banks of the Oroonoko. Those sounds he philosophically supposes may arise from the difference of temperature between the external air and that contained in the narrow and deep crevices of the rocks; the air issuing from which may be modified by its impulse against the elastic films of mica projecting into the crevices; producing, in fact, a natural and gigantic eölina, the simple but beautiful arrangement of musical chords which is now so commonly heard.

A somewhat similar phenomenon, which gives rise to an Arab superstition, occurs about three leagues from Tor, on the Red Sea. The spot, which is half a mile from the sea, bears the name of Nakous, or the Bell. It is about three hundred feet high,and eighty feet wide, presents a steep declivity to the sea, and is covered by sand, and surrounded by low rocks, in the form of an amphitheatre. The sounds which it emits are not periodical, but are heard at all hours and at all seasons. The place was twice visited by Mr. Gray. On the first visit, after waiting a quarter of an hour, he heard a low continuous murmuring sound beneath his feet, which, as it increased in loudness, gradually changed into pulsations, resembling the ticking of a clock. In five minutes more it became so powerful as to resemble the striking of a clock, and, by its vibrations, to detach the sand from the surface. When he returned, on the following day, he heard the sound still louder than before. Both times the air was calm, and the sky serene; so that the external air could have no share in producing the phenomenon; nor could he find any crevice by which it could penetrate. The noise is affirmed by the people of Tor to frighten and render furious the camels that hear it; and the Arabs of the desert poetically ascribe it to the bell of a convent of monks, which convent they believe to have been miraculously preserved under ground. Seetzen, another visitor, attributes the phenomenon to the rolling down of the sand.

Rufinus informs us that, when it was destroyed by order of Theodosius, the temple of Serapis at Alexandria was found to be full of secret passages, and machines, contrived to aid the impostures of the priests; among other things on the eastern side of the temple, was a little window, through which, on a

certain day of the year, the sunbeams entering fell on the mouth of the statue of Memnon. At the same moment an iron image of the sun was brought in, which, being attracted by a large loadstone fixed in the ceiling, ascended up to the image. The priests then cried out, that the sun saluted their god.

This Memnon was said to be the son of Tithonus and Aurora, and a statue of him in black marble was set up at Thebes. It is also related that the mouth of the statue, when first touched by the rays of the rising sun, sent forth a sweet and harmonious sound, as though it rejoiced when its mother Aurora appeared; but, at the setting of the sun, it sent forth a low melancholy tone, as if lamenting its mother's departure.

On the left leg of one of the colossal figures called Memnon are engraved the names of many celebrated personages, who have borne witness, at different times, of their having heard the musical tones which proceeded from the statue on the rising and setting of the sun. Strabo was an *ear*-witness to the fact that an articulate sound was heard, but doubted whether it came from the statue.

The oracle which held the greatest reputation, and extended it over the world, was Delphi; yet upon what slight grounds were the minds of people led captive by the love of the marvellous and a proneness to superstition! Of this celebrated place so many fables are related, some of them referring to times long before any authentic account of the existence of such an oracle, that it is difficult to decide upon the real period.

On the southern side of Mount Parnassus, within the western border of Phocis, against Locris, and at no great distance from the sea-port towns of Crissa

and Cirrha, the mountain-crags form a natural amphitheatre, difficult of access, in the midst of which a deep cavern discharged from a narrow orifice a vapour powerfully affecting the brain of those who came within its influence. This was first brought into public notice by a goatherd, whose goats, browsing on the brink, were thrown into singular convulsions; upon which the man, going to the spot, and endeavouring to look into the chasm, became himself agitated like one frantic. These extraordinary circumstances were communicated through the neighbourhood; and the superstitious ignorance of the age immediately attributed them to a deity residing in the place. Frenzy of every kind among the Greeks, even in more enlightened times, was supposed to be the effect of divine inspiration; and the incoherent speeches of the frantic were regarded as prophetical. This spot, formerly visited only by goats, now became an object of extensive curiosity. It was said to be the oracle of the goddess Earth. The rude inhabitants from all the neighbouring parts resorted to it, for information concerning futurity; to obtain which any one of them inhaled the vapour, and whatever he uttered in the ensuing intoxication passed for prophecy. This was found dangerous, however, as many, becoming giddy, fell into the cavern and were lost; and in an assembly it was agreed that one person should alone receive the inspiration, and render the responses of the divinity. A virgin was preferred for the sacred office, and a frame prepared, resting on three feet, whence it was called tripod. The place bore the name of Pytho, and thence the title of Pythoness, or Pythia, became attached to the prophetess. By degrees a rude temple was built over the cavern, priests were appointed, ceremonies were prescribed, and

sacrifices were performed. A revenue was necessary. All who would consult the oracle henceforward must come with offerings in their hands. The profits produced by the prophecies of the goddess Earth beginning to fail, the priests asserted that the god Neptune was associated with her in the oracle. The goddess Themis was then reported to have succeeded mother Earth. Still new incentives to public credulity and curiosity became necessary. Apollo was a deity of great reputation in the islands, and in Asia Minor, but had at that time little fame on the continent of Greece. At this period, a vessel from Crete came to Crissa, and the crew landing proceeded up Mount Parnassus to Delphi. It was reported that the vessel and crew, by a preternatural power, were impelled to the port, accompanied by a dolphin of uncommon magnitude, who discovered himself to be Apollo, and who ordered the crew to follow him to Delphi and become his ministers. Thus the oracle recovered and increased its reputation. Delphi had the advantage of being near the centre of Greece, and was reported to be the centre of the earth; miracles were invented to prove so important a circumstance, and the navel of the earth was among the titles which it acquired. Afterwards vanity came in aid of superstition, in bringing riches to the temple: the names of those who made considerable presents were always registered, and exhibited in honour of the donors.

The Pythoness was chosen from among mountain cottagers, the most unacquainted with mankind that could be found. It was required that she should be a virgin, and originally taken when very young; and once appointed, she was never to quit the temple. But, unfortunately, it happened that one Pythoness made her escape; her singular beauty enamoured a

young Thessalian, who succeeded in the hazardous attempt to carry her off. It was afterwards decreed that no Pythoness should be appointed under fifty years of age.

This office appears not to have been very desirable. Either the emanation from the cavern, or some art of the managers, threw her into real convulsions. Priests, entitled prophets, led her to the sacred tripod, force being often necessary for the purpose, and held her on it, till her frenzy rose to whatever pitch was in their judgment most fit for the occasion. Some of the Pythonesses are said to have expired almost immediately after quitting the tripod, and even on it. The broken accents which the wretch uttered in her agony were collected and arranged by the prophets, and then promulgated as the answer of the god. Till a late period, they were always in verse. The priests had it always in their power to deny answers, delay them, or render them dubious or unintelligible, as they judged most advantageous for the credit of the oracle. But if princes or great men applied in a proper manner for the sanction of the god to any undertaking, they seldom failed to receive it in direct terms, provided the reputation of the oracle for truth was not liable to immediate danger from the event.

Theophrastus, bishop of Alexandria, showed the inhabitants of that town the hollow statue into which the former priests of the pagan oracle had privately crept whilst delivering their responses; and a modern traveller corroborates this fact, by a similar discovery made among the excavations at Pompeii. "In the temple of Isis," says Dr. J. Johnson, "we see the identical spot where the priests concealed themselves, whilst delivering the oracles that were supposed to proceed from the mouth of the goddess. There were

found the bones of the victims sacrificed, and in the refectory of the abstemious priests were discovered the remains of ham, fowls, eggs, fish, and bottles of wine. These jolly friars were carousing most merrily, and no doubt laughing heartily at the credulity of mankind, when Vesuvius poured out a libation on their heads which put an end to their mirth*."

"To cut the Gordian knot" has long been proverbial for an independent and unexpected way of overcoming difficulties, however great. It took its rise from a circumstance related with some variations by several ancient authors, and with great simplicity by Arrian; it is the more a curiosity as coming from a man of his eminence in his enlightened age.

At a remote period, says he, a Phrygian yeoman, named Gordius, was holding his own plough on his own land, when an eagle perched on the yoke and remained whilst he continued his work. Wondering at a matter so apparently preternatural, he deemed it expedient to consult some person among those who had reputation for expounding indications of the divine will. In the neighbouring province of Pisidia the people of Telmissus had wide fame for that skill; it was supposed instinctive and hereditary in men and women of particular families. Going thither, as he approached the first village of the Telmissian territory, he saw a girl drawing water at a spring; and making

* At the time of writing this chapter, (1837,) there is arrived in London a specimen of this species of manufacture; it is a singular relic, consisting of a very elaborate carving in wood of the Crucifixion, and is a ludicrous evidence of monkish trickery. A hole is perforated from behind, through which, by the application of a sponge dipped in blood, a stream was made to travel to the front, where it was seen to discharge itself from a crevice in the Saviour's side, which stands for the spear-wound, so that the figure had the appearance of shedding real blood, and the drops so discharged were sold to the devotees at an enormous price.

some inquiry, which led to further conversation, he related the phenomenon. It happened that the girl was of a race of seers; she told him to return immediately home, and sacrifice to Jupiter the king. Satisfied so far, he remained anxious about the manner of performing the ceremony, so that it might be certainly acceptable to the deity; and the result was that he married the girl, and she accompanied him home.

Nothing important followed till a son of this match, named Midas, had attained manhood. The Phrygians then, distressed by violent civil dissentions, consulted an oracle for means to allay them. The answer was, "that a cart would bring them a king to relieve their troubles." The assembly was already formed to receive official communication of the divine will, when Gordius and Midas arrived in their cart to attend it. Presently the notion arose and spread, that one of those in that cart must be the person intended by the oracle. Gordius was then advanced in years. Midas, who already had been extensively remarked for superior powers of both body and mind, was elected king of Phrygia. Tranquillity ensued among the people; and the cart, predesigned by heaven to bring a king the author of so much good, was, with its appendages, dedicated to the god, and placed in the citadel, where it was carefully preserved.

The yoke was fastened with a thong, formed of the bark of a cornel tree, so artificially that no eye could discover either end; and rumour was become popular of an oracle, which declared that whosoever loosened that thong would be lord of Asia. The extensive credit which this rumour had obtained, and the reported failure of the attempts of many great men, gave an importance to it. Alexander, in the progress of his campaign in Asia, arrived at Gordium, and of

course visited the castle in which was preserved the Gordian knot. While, with many around, he was admiring it, the observation occurred that it being his purpose to become lord of Asia, he should, for the sake of popular opinion, have the credit of loosening the yoke. Some writers have reported that he cut the knot with his sword; but Aristobulus, who, as one of his generals, is likely to have been present, related that he wrested the pin from the beam, and so, taking off the yoke, said that was enough for him to be lord of Asia.

Thunder and lightning on the following night, says Arrian, confirmed the assertion that Alexander had effected what the oracle had declared was to be done only by one who should be lord of Asia. Accordingly on the morrow he performed a magnificent thanksgiving sacrifice, in acknowledgment of the favour of the gods, thus promised: a measure as full of policy as devotion.

In Cornwall are to be found enormous piles of stone, which bear the name of Ambrosian, Logan, or Rocking Stones. Structures of this kind, as they may, perhaps, reasonably be called, are of very great antiquity, being represented on medals of Tyre. They appear to have been composed of cones of rock let into the ground, with other stones adapted to their points, and so nicely balanced, that the wind could move them; and yet so ponderous, that no human force, unaided by machinery, could displace them. The figures of Apollo Didymus, on the Syrian coins, are placed sitting on the point of the cone, on which the more rude and primitive symbol of the Logan stone is found poised; and we are told, that the oracle of the god near Miletus existed before the emigration of the Ionian colonies, more than eleven hundred years before Christ.

Pliny, in his second book, relates, that there was one to be seen at Harpasa in Asia, exactly answering the description of those found in Cornwall. "Lay one finger on it, and it will stir; but thrust against it with your whole body, and it will not move." Hephæstion mentions the Gigonian stone, near the ocean, which may be moved with the stalk of an asphodel, but cannot be removed by any force. Several of these stones may be seen in the neighbourhood of Heliopolis, or Baalbeck, in Syria; and one in particular has been seen in motion by the force of the wind alone.

The famous Logan stone, commonly called Minamber, stood in the parish of Sithney, Cornwall. The top stone was so accurately poised on the one beneath, that a little child could move it; and all travellers went that way to see it; but in Cromwell's time, one Shrubsoll, Governor of Pendennis, with much ado caused it to be undermined and thrown down, to the great grief of the country: thus its wonderful property of moving so easily to a certain point was destroyed. —The cause which induced the Governor to overthrow it appears to have been that the vulgar used to resort to the place at particular times, and pay the stone more respect than was thought becoming good Christians.

A similar destructive act was committed, a few years since, by one of his majesty's officers, the commander of a revenue cutter. His achievement had, however, not even the excuse of a mistaken religious feeling to plead in its behalf; it seems to have been prompted merely by the spirit of mischief. Having landed a part of his crew, he, with infinite labour, succeeded in overturning the most celebrated Logan stone in Cornwall. But such was the odium with which he was visited in consequence of his exploit,

that he undertook the gigantic task of restoring the stone to its original situation; and he was fortunate or skilful enough to succeed. A description of the situation and magnitude of the enormous mass which he had to raise will give some idea of the difficulty which he had to encounter. It is situated "on a peninsula of granite, jutting out two hundred yards into the sea, the isthmus still exhibiting some remains of the ancient fortification of Castle Treryn. The granite which forms this peninsula is split by perpendicular and horizontal fissures into a heap of cubical or prismatic masses. The whole mass varies in height from fifty to a hundred feet; it presents on almost every side a perpendicular face to the sea, and is divided into four summits, on one of which, near the centre of the promontory, the stone in question lies. The general figure of the stone is irregular: its lower surface is not quite flat, but swells out into a slight protuberance, on which the rock is poised. It rests on a surface so inclined, that it seems as if a small alteration in its position would cause it to slide along the plane into the sea, for it is within two or three feet of the edge of the precipice. The stone is seventeen feet in length, and above thirty-two in circumference near the middle, and is estimated to weigh nearly sixty-six tons. The vibration is only in one direction, and that nearly at right angles to the length. A force of a very few pounds is sufficient to bring it into a state of vibration; even the wind blowing on its western surface, which is exposed, produces this effect in a sensible degree. The vibration continues a few seconds."

Such immense masses being moved by means so inadequate must naturally have conveyed the idea of spontaneous motion to ignorant persons, and have

persuaded them, that they were animated by an emanation from the Deity or Great Spirit, and, as such, might be consulted as oracles.

> "Behold yon huge
> And unhewn sphere of living adamant,
> Which, poised by magic, rests its central weight
> On yonder pointed rock; firm as it seems,
> Such is its strange and virtuous property,
> It moves obsequious to the gentlest touch."

It cannot be doubted that those Logan stones are druidical monuments; but it is not certain what particular use the priests made of them. Mr. Toland thinks that the Druids made the people believe, that they could only be moved miraculously, and by this pretended miracle they condemned or acquitted an accused person. It is likely that some of these stones were of natural formation, and that the Druids made and consecrated others; by such pious frauds increasing their private gain, and establishing an ill-grounded authority by deluding the common people. The basins cut on the top of these stones, had their part to act in these juggles; and the ruffling or quiescence of the water was to declare the wrath or testify the pleasure of the god consulted, and somehow or other to confirm the decision of the Druids.

## CHAPTER III.

### FALSE MESSIAHS, PROPHETS, AND MIRACLES.

Susceptibility of the Imagination in the East—Mahomet—His Origin—He assumes the Title of the Apostle of God—Opposition to him—Revelations brought to him by the Angel Gabriel—His Flight to Medina—Success of his Imposture—Attempt to poison him—His Death—Tradition respecting his Tomb—Account of his Intercourse with Heaven—Sabatai Sevi, a false Messiah—Superstitious Tradition among the Jews—Reports respecting the Coming of the Messiah—Sabatai pretends to be the Messiah—He is assisted by Nathan—Follies committed by the Jews—Honours paid to Sabatai—He embarks for Constantinople—His Arrest—He embraces Mahometism to avoid Death—Rosenfeld, a German, proclaims himself the Messiah—His Knavery—He is whipped and imprisoned—Richard Brothers announces himself as the revealed Prince and Prophet of the Jews—He dies in Bedlam—Thomas Muncer and his Associates—Their Fate—Matthias, John of Leyden, and other Anabaptist Leaders—They are defeated and executed—The French Prophets—Punishment of them—Miracles at the Grave of the Deacon Paris—Horrible Self-inflictions of the Convulsionaries—The Brothers of Brugglen—They are executed—Prophecy of a Lifeguardsman in London—Joanna Southcott—Her Origin, Progress, and Death—Folly of her Disciples—Miracles of Prince Hohenloe.

The earlier species of superstitious belief are now passed away, and the remembrance of them only serves to adorn poetic fiction. In Eastern countries, where the imagination is more susceptible, men have yielded a religious faith to one, the rapid extension of whose tenets, though subsequent indeed to his death, was as astonishing as the boldness and effrontery of his attempt; which may be considered without a parallel in the annals of imposture.

Mahomet, the original contriver and founder of the false religion so extensively professed in the East, has always been designated, *par excellence*, "The Impostor." He was born at Mecca, in the year of our

Lord five hundred and seventy-one, of the tribe of the Koreshites, the noblest and most powerful in the country. In his youth he was employed by his uncle, a merchant, as a camel-driver; and, as a term of reproach, and proof of the lowness of his origin, his enemies used to call him "The Camel-driver." When he was once in the market-place of Bostra with his camels, it is asserted, that he was recognised by a learned monk, called Bahira, as a prophet; the monk pretended to know him by a halo of divine light around his countenance, and he hailed him with joy and veneration.

In his twenty-fifth year Mahomet married a rich widow; this raised him to affluence, and he appeared at that time to have formed the secret plan of obtaining for himself sovereign power. He assumed the character of superior sanctity, and every morning retired to a secret cave, near Mecca, where he devoted the day to prayer, abstinence, and holy meditation.

In his fortieth year, he took the title of Apostle of God, and increased his fame by perseverance, and the aid of pretended visions. He made at first but few proselytes; his enemies, who suspected his designs, and perhaps foresaw his bold and rapid strides to power, heaped on him the appellations of impostor, liar, and magician. But he overcame all opposition in promulgating his doctrine, chiefly by flattering the passions and prejudices of his nation. In a climate exposed to a burning sun, he allured the imagination, by promising as rewards, in the future state, rivers of cooling waters, shady retreats, luxurious fruits, and immaculate houris. His system of religion was given out as the command of God, and he produced occasionally various chapters, which had been copied from the archives of Heaven, and brought down to him by

the Angel Gabriel; and if difficulties or doubts were started, they were quickly removed, as this obliging angel brought down fresh revelations to support his character for sanctity. When miracles were demanded of him, in testimony of his divine mission, he said with an air of authority, that God had sent Moses and Christ with miracles, and men would not believe; therefore, he had sent him in the last place without them, and to use a sword in their stead. This communication exposed him to some danger, and he was compelled to fly from Mecca to Medina; from which period is fixed the Hegira, or flight, at which he began to propagate his doctrines by the sword. His arms were successful. In spite of some checks, he ultimately overcame or gained over all his foes, and within ten years after his flight, his authority was recognised throughout the Arabian peninsula. Among the tribes subjugated by his sword was the Jewish tribe of Khaibar. He put to death Kenana, the chief, who assumed the title of King of the Jews; and after the victory, he took up his abode in the house of a Jew, whose son, Marhad, had fallen in the contest. This circumstance nearly cost him his life. Desirous to avenge her brother, Zeinab, the sister of Marhab, put poison in a shoulder of mutton, which was served up to Mahomet. The prophet was saved by seeing one of his officers fall, who had begun before him to eat of the dish. He hastily rejected the morsel which he had taken into his own mouth; but so virulent was the poison that his health was severely injured, and his death is thought to have been hastened by it. On being questioned as to the motive which prompted her, Zeinab boldly replied, "I wished to discover whether you are really a prophet, in which case you could preserve yourself from the poison; and, if you

were not so, I sought to deliver my country from an impostor and a tyrant."

Mahomet died at Medina; and a fabulous tradition asserts that his body, in an iron coffin, was suspended in the air, through the agency of two loadstones, concealed, one in the roof, and the other beneath the floor of his mausoleum.

The success of this impostor, during his life, is not more astonishing than the extent to which his doctrines have been propagated since his death. The Koran was compiled subsequent to his decease, from chapters said to have been brought by the Angel Gabriel from Heaven. It is composed of sublime truths, incredible fables, and ludicrous events; by artful interpolation he grafted on his theories such parts of the Holy Scriptures as suited his purpose, and announced himself to be that Comforter which our Saviour had promised should come after him.

Mahomet was a man of ready wit, and bore all the affronts of his enemies with concealed resentment. Many artifices were had recourse to, for the purpose of delusion; it is said a bull was taught to bring him on its horns revelations, as if sent from God; and he bred up pigeons to come to his ears, and feign thereby that the Holy Ghost conversed with him. His ingenuity made him turn to his own advantage circumstances otherwise against him. He was troubled with the falling sickness, and he persuaded his followers that, during the moments of suspended animation, he accompanied the Angel Gabriel, in various journeys, borne by the celestial beast Alborak, and that, ascending to the highest heavens, he was permitted to converse familiarly with the Almighty.

His first interview with the angel took place at night, when in bed; he heard a knocking at the

door, and having opened it, he then saw the Angel Gabriel, with seventy-nine pair of wings, expanded from his sides, whiter than snow, and clearer than crystal, and the celestial beast beside him. This beast he described as being between an ass and mule, as white as milk, and of extraordinary swiftness. Mahomet was most kindly embraced by the angel, who told him that he was sent to bring him unto God in heaven, where he should see strange mysteries, which were not lawful to be seen by other men, and bade him get upon the beast; but the beast having long lain idle, from the time of Christ till Mahomet, was grown so restive and skittish, that he would not stand still for Mahomet to get upon him, till at length he was forced to bribe him to it, by promising him a place in Paradise. The beast carried him to Jerusalem in the twinkling of an eye. The departed saints saluted them, and they proceeded to the Oratory in the Temple; returning from the Temple they found a ladder of light ready fixed for them, which they immediately ascended, leaving the Alborak there tied to a rock till their return.

Mahomet is said to have given a dying promise to return in a thousand years; but that time being already past, his faithful followers say the period he really mentioned was two thousand, though, owing to the weakness of his voice, he could not be distinctly heard.

A pilgrimage to Mecca is thought, by devout Mahometans, to be the most efficacious means of procuring remission of sins and the enjoyments of Paradise; and even the camels * which go on that journey are held

* "The camels which have had the honour to bear presents to Mecca or Medina, are not to be treated afterwards as common animals. They are considered consecrated to Mahomet, which

so sacred after their return, that many fanatical Turks, when they have seen them, destroy their eyesight by looking closely on hot bricks, desiring to see nothing profane after so sacred a spectacle.

The early leaning of the Jews towards idolatry and superstition has been recorded in terms that admit of no dispute, by their own historians. The same leaning continued to be manifest in them for many ages. Sandys, in his travels, heard of an ancient tradition current on the borders of the Red Sea, that the day on which the Jews celebrate the passover, loaves of bread, by time converted into stone, are seen to arise from that sea*; and are supposed to be some of the bread the Jews left in their passage.

They were sold at Grand Cairo, handsomely made up in the manner and shape of the bread at *the time in which he wrote;* and this was of itself sufficient to betray the imposture.

The anxiously-expected appearance of their Messiah made the Jews very easily imposed upon by

exempts them from all labour and service; they have cottages built for their abodes, where they live at ease, and receive plenty of food, and the most careful attention."—Travels of Father Strope.

* "The rising of dead men's bones every year in Egypt is a thing superstitiously believed by the Christian worshippers, and by the priests out of ignorance, or policy. Metrophanes, patriarch of Alexandria, thought the possibility of such an occurrence might be proved out of Isaiah, c. 66, v. 24, 'and they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me.' A Frenchman at Cairo, who had been present at the resurrection of these bones, showed me an arm from thence; the flesh was shrivelled and dried like the mummies. He observed the miracle to have been always performed *behind him*, and once casually looking back, he discovered some bones carried privately by an Egyptian, under his vest, whence he understood the mystery."—Sandys' Travels.

those who for interested motives chose to assume so sacred a title. Our Saviour predicted the coming of false Christs, and many have since his day appeared, though perhaps no false prophet in later days has excited a more general commotion in that nation than Sabatai Sevi.

According to the prediction of several Christian writers, who commented on the Apocalypse, the year 1666 was to prove one of wonders, and particularly of blessings to the Jews; and reports flew from place to place, of the march of multitudes of people from unknown parts in the remote deserts of Asia, supposed to be the ten tribes and a half lost for so many ages, and also that a ship had arrived in the north of Scotland, with sails and cordage of silk, navigated by mariners who spoke nothing but Hebrew; with this motto on their flag, "The twelve tribes of Israel." These reports agreeing thus near with former predictions, led the credulous to expect that the year would produce strange events with reference to the Jewish nation.

Thus were millions of people possessed, when Sabatai Sevi appeared at Smyrna, and proclaimed himself to the Jews as their Messiah; declaring the greatness of his approaching kingdom, and the strong hand whereby God was about to deliver them from bondage, and gather them together.

"It was strange," says Mr. Evelyn, "to see how this fancy took, and how fast the report of Sabatai and his doctrine flew through those parts of Turkey the Jews inhabited: they were so deeply possessed of their new kingdom, and their promotion to honour, that none of them attended to business of any kind, except to prepare for a journey to Jerusalem."

Sabatai was the son of Mordechai Sevi, an inha-

bitant of Smyrna, who acted as a broker to English merchants. His son, studying metaphysics, vented a new doctrine in the law; and, gaining some disciples, he attracted sufficient notice to cause his banishment from the city. During his exile he was twice married, but soon after each ceremony he obtained a divorce. At Jerusalem he married a third time. He there began to preach a reform in the law, and meeting with another Jew, named Nathan, he communicated to him his intention of proclaiming himself the Messiah, so long expected, and so much desired by the Jews.

Nathan assisted in this deceit, and as, according to the ancient prophecies, it was necessary Elias should precede the Messiah, Nathan thought no one so proper as himself to personate that prophet. Nathan, therefore, as the forerunner of the Messiah, announced to the Jews what was about to take place, and that consequently nothing but joy and triumph ought to dwell in their habitations. This delusion being once begun, many Jews really believed what they so much desired; and Nathan took courage to prophesy, that in one year from the 27th of Kislen (June), the Messiah should appear, and take from the Grand Signor his crown, and lead him in chains like a captive.

Sabatai meanwhile preached at Gaza repentance to the Jews, and obedience to himself and his doctrine. These novelties very much affected the Jews; and they gave themselves up to prayers, alms, and devotion. The rumour flying abroad, letters of congratulation came from all parts to Jerusalem and Gaza: and, thus encouraged, Sabatai resolved to travel to Smyrna, and thence to Constantinople, the capital city, where the principal work was to be performed.

All was now expectation among the Jews; no trade was followed, and every one imagined that daily provisions, riches and honour, were to descend upon him miraculously. Many fasted so long that they were famished to death; others buried themselves in their gardens up to the neck; but the most common mortification was to prick their backs and sides with thorns, and then give themselves thirty-nine lashes.

To avoid the necessity of business, which was even made a fineable offence, the rich were taxed to support the poor; and lest the Messiah should accuse them of neglecting ancient precepts, particularly that to increase and multiply, they married together children of ten years and under. Without respect to riches or poverty, to the number of six or seven hundred couple were indiscriminately joined: but on better and cooler thoughts, after the deceit was discovered, or expectation grew cold, these children were divorced or separated by mutual consent.

At Smyrna, Sabatai was well received by the common Jews, but not so by the chochams or doctors of the law, who gave no credence to his pretensions. Yet Sabatai, bringing testimonials of his sanctity, holy life, wisdom, and gift of prophecy, so deeply fixed himself in the hearts of the generality that he took courage to dispute with the grand chocham. Arguments grew so strong, and language so hot, between the disputants, that the Jews who espoused Sabatai's doctrine appeared in great numbers before the Cadi of Smyrna, in justification of him. Sabatai thus gained ground, whilst the grand chocham in like proportion lost it, as well as the affection and obedience of his people, and ultimately he was displaced.

No invitation was now ever made by the Jews, or marriage ceremony solemnised, where Sabatai was

not present, accompanied by a multitude of followers; and the streets were covered with carpets or fine cloths for him to tread upon, which the pretended humility of this Pharisee stooped to turn aside. Many of his followers became prophetic; and infants, who could scarcely stammer a syllable to their mothers, could pronounce and repeat his name. There were still, however, numbers bold enough to dispute his mission, and to proclaim him an impostor.

Sabatai then proceeded with great presumption to an election of princes, who were to govern the Israelites during their march to the Holy Land. Miracles were thought necessary for the confirmation of the Jews in their faith; and it was pretended that on one occasion a pillar of fire was seen between Sabatai and the cadi: though but few were said to have seen it, it speedily became the general belief, and Sabatai returned triumphant to his house, fixed in the hearts of all his people. He then prepared for his journey to Constantinople, where his great work was to be accomplished; but, to avoid the confusion of his numerous followers, he went by sea with a small party, and was detained thirty-nine days by contrary winds. His followers, having arrived overland before him, awaited his coming with great anxiety. Having heard of the disorder and madness that had spread among the Jews, and fearing the consequences, the vizir sent a boat to arrest Sabatai, and he was brought ashore a prisoner, and committed to the darkest dungeon, to await his sentence.

Undiscouraged by this event, the Jews were rather confirmed in their belief; and visited him with the same ceremony, and respect, as if exalted on the throne of Israel. Sabatai was kept a prisoner two months, and then removed to the castle of Abydos,

where he was so much sought after by the Jews, that the Turks demanded five or ten dollars for the admission of each proselyte. At his leisure in this castle, he composed a new mode of worship.

The Jews now only awaited the personal appearance of Elias, previous to the glorious consummation. There is a superstition among them, that Elias is invisibly present in their families, and they generally spread a table for him, to which they invite poor people; leaving the chief seat for the Lord Elias, who they believe partakes of the entertainment with gratitude. On one occasion, at the ceremony of circumcision, Sabatai took advantage of this credulity, for he exhorted the parents to wait awhile, and, after an interval of half an hour, he ordered them to proceed. The reason he gave for this delay was, that Elias had not at first taken the seat prepared for him, and therefore he had waited till he saw him sit down.

Having had the history of the whole affair laid before him, the grand seignor sent for Sabatai to Adrianople. On receiving the summons, the pseudo Messiah appeared to be much dejected, and to have lost that courage which he formerly showed in the synagogues. The grand seignor would not be satisfied without a miracle, any more than the Jews; but he wisely resolved that it should be one of his own choosing. He ordered that Sabatai should be stripped naked, and set up as a mark for the dexterous archers of the sultan to shoot at, and, if it was found that his skin was arrow-proof, he would then believe him to be the Messiah. Not having faith enough in himself to stand so sharp a trial, Sabatai renounced all title to kingdoms and governments, alleging that he was merely an ordinary chocham. Not satisfied with this, the grand seignor declared that the treason of the Jew

was only to be expiated by a conversion to Mahometism, which if he refused, a stake was ready at the gate of the Seraglio, on which to impale him. Sabatai replied, with much cheerfulness, that he was contented to turn Turk; and that not of force, but choice, he having been a long time desirous of so glorious a profession.

When the Jews received intelligence of Sabatai's apostacy, and found that all their insane hopes were completely blighted, they were filled with consternation and shame. The news quickly spread all over Turkey, and they became so much the common derision of all the unbelievers, that, for a long time, they were overcome with confusion and dejection of spirit.

Of subsequent pretenders to the sacred character of the Messiah, it must suffice to mention two; the one of them a German, the other an English subject.

The German, whose name was Hans Rosenfeld, was a gamekeeper. The scene of his impious or insane pretensions was Prussia and the neighbouring states. He taught that Christianity was a deception, and that its priests were impostors. Having thus summarily disposed of spiritual matters, he proceeded to meddle with temporal in a manner which was not a little dangerous under a despotic government. Frederick the Great, who was then on the throne, he declared to be the devil; and, as it was not fit that the devil should reign, Rosenfeld made known that he intended to depose him. Having accomplished this difficult feat, he was to rule the world, at the head of a council of twenty-four elders. The seven seals were then to be opened. In his choice of the angels who were to open the seals, he took care to have an eye to his own pleasure and interest. He demanded from his followers seven beautiful girls, who were to fill the

important office; but that, in the mean while, the office might not be a sinecure, they held the place of mistresses to him, and maintained him by their labour.

Rosenfeld was suffered to go on thus for twenty years, with occasionally a short imprisonment, and he still continued to find dupes. He might, perhaps, have gone to his grave without receiving any serious check, had he not been overthrown, though unintentionally, by one of his own partisans. This man, who had resigned three of his daughters to the impostor, was tired of waiting so long for his promised share of the good things which the pseudo Messiah was to dispense; it was not his faith, it was only his patience, that was exhausted. To quicken the movements of Rosenfeld, he hit upon a rare expedient. As, according to his creed, the king was the devil, he went to him for the purpose of provoking the monarch to play the devil, by acting in such a manner as should compel the impostor to exert immediately his supernatural powers. On this provocation, Frederick did act, and with effect. Rosenfeld was ordered to be tried; the trial took place in 1782, and the tribunal sentenced him to be whipped, and imprisoned for life at Spandau. Against this sentence he twice appealed, but it was finally executed.

The English claimant of divine honours was Richard Brothers. He was born at Placentia, in Newfoundland, and had served in the navy, but resigned his commission, because, to use his own words, he "conceived the military life to be totally repugnant to the duties of Christianity, and he could not conscientiously receive the wages of plunder, bloodshed, and murder." This step reduced him to great poverty, and he appears to have suffered much in consequence. His mind was already shaken, and his

privations and solitary reflections seem at length to have entirely overthrown it. The first instance of his madness appears to have been his belief that he could restore sight to the blind. He next began to see visions and to prophesy, and soon became persuaded that he was commissioned by Heaven to lead back the Jews to Palestine. It was in the latter part of 1794 that he announced, through the medium of the press, his high destiny. His rhapsody bore the title of "A revealed Knowledge of the Prophecies and Times. Book the First. Wrote under the direction of the Lord God, and published by his sacred command; it being the first sign of warning for the benefit of all nations. Containing, with other great and remarkable things, not revealed to any other person on earth, the restoration of the Hebrews to Jerusalem, by the year of 1798: under their revealed prince and prophet." A second part speedily followed, which purported to relate "particularly to the present time, the present war, and the prophecy now fulfilling: containing, with other great and remarkable things, not revealed to any other person on earth, the sudden and perpetual fall of the Turkish, German, and Russian Empires." Among many similar flights, in this second part, was one which described visions revealing to him the intended destruction of London, and claimed for the prophet the merit of having saved the city, by his intercession with the Deity.

Though every page of his writings betrayed the melancholy state of the unfortunate man's mind, such is the infatuation of human beings, that he speedily gained a multitude of partisans, who placed implicit faith in the divine nature of his mission. Nor were his followers found only in the humble and unenlightened classes of society. Strange as it may appear,

he was firmly believed in by men of talent and education. Among his most devoted disciples were Sharpe, the celebrated engraver, whom we shall soon see clinging to Joanna Southcott; and Mr. Halhed, a profound scholar, a man of great wit and acuteness, and a member of the House of Commons. The latter gave to the world various pamphlets, strongly asserting the prophetic mission of Brothers, and actually made in the House a motion in favour of the prince of the Jews. Numerous pamphlets were also published by members of the new sect.

Brothers was now conveyed to a madhouse at Islington; but he continued to see visions, and to pour forth his incoherences in print. One of his productions, while he was in this asylum, was a letter, of two hundred pages, to "Miss Cott, the recorded daughter of King David, and future Queen of the Hebrews. With an Address to the Members of his Britannic Majesty's Council." The lady to whom his letter was addressed had been an inmate of the same receptacle with himself, and he became so enamoured, that he discovered her to be "the recorded daughter of both David and Solomon," and his spouse, "by divine ordinance." Brothers was subsequently removed to Bedlam, where he resided till his decease, which did not take place for several years.

Among the most mischievous of the pretenders to prophetical inspiration may be reckoned Thomas Müncer, and his companions, Storck, Stübner, Cellarius, Thomas, and several others, contemporaries of Luther, from whom sprang the sect of the Anabaptists. Eighty-four of them assumed the character of twelve apostles and seventy-two disciples. "They state wonderful things respecting themselves," says Melancthon, in a letter to the Elector of Saxony;

"namely, that they are sent to instruct mankind by the clear voice of God; that they verily hold converse with God, see future things, and, in short, are altogether prophetical and apostolical men." Müncer was, of them all, the one who possessed the highest portion of talents and eloquence, and chiefly by his exertions a spirit of insurrection was excited among the peasantry. Expelled from Saxony, he found a retreat at Alstadt, in Thuringia, where the people listened to his revelations, gave him the chief authority in the place, and proceeded to establish that community of goods which was one of his doctrines. The War of the Peasants had by this time broken out, but Müncer hesitated to place himself at their head. The exhortations of Pfeifer, another impostor, of a more daring spirit, and who pretended to have seen visions predictive of success, at length induced him to take the field. His force was, however, speedily attacked, near Frankhuysen, by the army of the allied princes, and, in spite of the courage and eloquence which he displayed, it was utterly defeated. Müncer escaped for the moment, but speedily fell into the hands of his enemies, and, after having been twice tortured, was beheaded. The same fate befel Pfeifer and some of his associates. Of the unfortunate peasants, who had been driven to arms by oppression, still more than by fanaticism, several thousands perished.

Nine years afterwards, consequences equally disastrous were produced by fanatical leaders of the same sect. In 1534, John Matthias of Haarlem, and John Boecold, who, from his birth-place being Leyden, is generally known as John of Leyden, at the head of their followers, among the most conspicuous of whom were Knipperdolling, and Bernard Rothman, a celebrated preacher, succeeded in making themselves

masters of the city of Münster. Though Matthias was originally a baker, and the latter a journeyman tailor, they were unquestionably men of great courage and ability. As soon as they were in possession of the place, the authority was assumed by Matthias, and equality and a community of goods were established, and the name of Münster was changed to that of Mount Sion. The city was soon besieged by its bishop, Count Waldeck. Matthias, who had hitherto displayed considerable skill in his military preparations, now took a step which proved that his reason had wholly deserted him. He determined, in imitation of Gideon, to go forth with only thirty men, and overthrow the besieging host. Of course he and his associates perished.

John of Leyden now became the principal leader. To establish his authority, he pretended to fall into a trance, and have visions. Among the revelations made to him were, that he was to appoint twelve elders of the people, similar to those of the twelve Hebrew tribes, and that the laws of marriage were to be changed, each person being henceforth at liberty to marry as many wives as he chose. Of the latter permission he availed himself to the extent of three wives, one of whom was the widow of Matthias. A new prophet now started up, who was a watchmaker by trade. Charged, as he pretended, with a mission from above, he gathered round him a multitude, and announced it to be the will of Heaven, that John of Leyden should be crowned king of all the earth, and should march at the head of an army to put down princes and unbelievers. John was accordingly enthroned; and, decked in royal ornaments, he held his court in an open part of the city. Among his first acts of sovereignty appears to have been the de-

spatching, in pursuance of a celestial order, twenty-eight missionaries, to spread the doctrines of his sect through the four quarters of the world. The twenty-eight apostles were readily found, and they proceeded to execute his orders. Of these unfortunate enthusiasts all but one endured tortures and death.

The bishop had by this time increased his force to an extent which enabled him to hold the city completely blockaded. The citizens suffered dreadfully from famine and disease; but John of Leyden lost not one jot of his confidence. One of his wives, having incautiously expressed her sympathy for the sufferers, was instantly punished by being beheaded, and her death was celebrated by the multitude with singing and dancing.

During all this time, John of Leyden displayed a degree of firmness, vigilance, and prudence in guarding against the enemy, which did credit to his abilities. Till nearly the end of June 1535, he contrived to hold the blockading army at bay. But the end of his reign was now approaching. Two fugitives gave the bishop information of a vulnerable point; and on the 24th of June a band of picked soldiers effected an entrance into the city. A desperate struggle ensued, and the king and his partisans fought with such desperate courage, that the assailants were on the very verge of defeat, when they contrived to open a gate, and admit the troops from without the walls. Resistance was speedily subdued by overwhelming numbers. Rothman was fortunate enough to fall by the sword; but John of Leyden, Knipperdolling, and another of the leaders, were taken, and died in the most barbarous torments; their flesh was torn from their bones by burning pincers, and their mangled remains were hung up in iron cages.

Passing to the commencement of the eighteenth century, we find a group of pretended prophets and miracle-workers, perhaps not less fanatical than those which have just been described, but certainly less noxious. They were protestants, and were known by the appellation of the French prophets. It was towards the latter end of 1706 that they came to England, from the mountains of the Cevennes, where their countrymen had for a considerable time maintained a contest with the troops of the persecuting Louis XIV. As exiles for conscience sake, they were treated with respect and kindness; but they soon forfeited all claim to respect by the folly or knavery of their conduct. Of this group Elias Marion was the prominent figure; the others acting only subordinate parts. He loudly proclaimed that he was the messenger of Heaven, and was authorised to denounce judgments, and to look into futurity. All kinds of arts were employed by Marion and his associates, to excite public attention—sudden droppings down as though death-struck; sighs and groans, and then shrieks and vociferations, on recovering; broken sentences, uttered in unearthly tones; violent contortions; and desperate strugglings with the Spirit, followed by submission and repentance; were all brought into play. The number of the believers in their power soon became considerable. In proportion as they gained partisans, they increased their vaunts of miraculous gifts; and at length they boldly announced that they were invested with power to raise the dead. They even went so far as to try the experiment; and, notwithstanding repeated failures, their besotted followers continued to adhere to them. In vain did the ministers and elders of the French chapel, in the Savoy, declare their pretensions to be blasphemous

and dangerous. Far from being deterred by this censure, the prophets grew more strennous in their exertions to make proselytes, and more daring in their inveetives; prophesying daily in the streets to crowds, launching invectives against the ministers of the established church, and predieting heavy judgments on the British metropolis and nation. It was at last thought neeessary to put a stop to their earcer, and they were eonsequently proseeuted as impostors. They were senteneed to be exposed on a scaffold, at Charing Cross and the Royal Exehange, with a paper deelaring their offenee; to pay each of them a fine of twenty marks; and to find seeurity for their good behaviour. After a time the seet whieh they had formed died away, but its ruin was less to be attributed to the punishment of the prophets, or the reeovery of reason by their votaries, than by a report whieh was spread that they were nothing more than the instruments of designing men, who wished to disseminate Soeinianism, and destroy orthodoxy.

About twenty years after the freaks of the French prophets had been put down in England, scenes oeeurred in the Freneh eapital which degrade human nature, and appear almost ineredible. Those scenes arose out of the eontest between the Jansenists and their antagonists, and the dispute respeeting the eelebrated Bull Unigenitus, which the Jansenists held in abhorrence. One of the oppugners of the bull was the deaeon Paris, a pious and eharitable man whose seruples on the subject prevented him from taking priest's orders, and who relinquished his patrimony to his younger brother, and lived by making stoekings, the gains arising from whieh humble oeeupation he shared with the poor.

His benevolence, his piety, and his austere life,

gained for him admiration and affection; and when he died, in 1727, his grave in the church-yard of St. Medard was visited by crowds, as that of a saint. Some of his votaries, who were diseased or infirm, soon began to imagine that a miracle was worked on them by the influence of the blessed deceased. Blind eyes were said to be restored to their faculty of seeing, and contracted limbs to be elongated. As faith increased, cures increased, and so did the multitudes which thronged from all parts, and consisted of the highest as well as the lowest ranks. The votaries now began to exhibit the most violent convulsionary movements, and to utter groans, shrieks, and cries. As such movements are readily propagated by sympathy, the number of persons affected grew daily greater. At length, the matter beginning to wear a serious aspect, the government shut up the church-yard; a proceeding which gave birth to a witty but somewhat profane distich, which was written upon the gate:

"De par le Roi, défense à Dieu
De faire miracle en ce lieu.

But though the votaries were expelled from the church-yard, they did not discontinue their practices. The scene of action was only removed to private houses. Miracles, too, were still worked by means of earth from the church-yard, and water from the well which had supplied the deacon's beverage. Pushing their frenzy to extremity, the convulsionaries, as they were called, invented a system of self-torture, not exceeded by that of the Hindoos. Their purpose was to obtain the miraculous aid of the beatified deacon. To be beaten with sticks, to bend the body into a semicircle, and suffer a stone of fifty pounds' weight to be dropped from the ceiling down on the

abdomen, and to lie with a plank on the same part, while several men stood upon it, were among the trials to which even women submitted, apparently with delight. In some instances their insanity prompted them to still more horrible displays; some being tied on spits and exposed to the flames, and others nailed to a cross by the hands and feet.

In this case, as in many others, we are astonished to find that men of learning and acute intellect are to be met with in the list of believers. There were also many who, notwithstanding they shrank from the irreverence of making the Deity a party to such deeds, believed the miracles to be really performed, and were, of course, under the necessity of giving the credit of them to the devil. It might naturally be supposed so insane a sect as that of the convulsionaries would speedily die away, but this did not happen; in spite of ridicule, and punishment, it maintained its ground to a certain extent for a long series of years, and there is some reason to doubt whether it is yet wholly extinct.

Two insane fanatics, of Brugglen, in the canton of Berne, did not escape with so slight a penalty as those who have already been recorded. They were brothers, named Rohler, and, in the year 1746, they proclaimed themselves to be the two witnesses mentioned in the eleventh chapter of the Revelation, and selected a girl of their acquaintance to fill the part of the woman who was to be clothed with the sun, and have the moon under her feet. The advent of Christ to judge the world, they fixed for the year 1748, after which event the kingdom of Heaven was to commence in their village. One of the brothers gave a sufficient proof of his being mad, by declaring that he would ascend in the flesh to heaven before the

assembled multitude. He had, however, cunning enough to attribute his failure to the circumstance of numbers of his followers holding by his garments, that they might take the journey with him. These lunaties were followed by crowds, who abandoned all their usual occupations, thinking it useless to work, when the final day was at hand; and many of the believers in their mission indulged in licentious pleasures, perhaps under the idea that, as little time was left, they ought to make the most of it. The government of Berne at length began to apprehend danger from this frenzy, and it averted the evil by dooming the brothers to death.

While the Bernese peasants were thus blindly yielding to superstitious delusions, a circumstanee occurred which proved that the enlightened citizens of the British capital were as liable as the Swiss boors to the same species of folly. In 1750, on the 8th of February, and the 8th of Mareh, two rather severe shoeks of earthquake were felt in London. As exaetly four weeks had elapsed between the two shocks, it was sagaeiously eoncluded that a third would occur at a similar period. The fear whieh this idea excited was raised to the highest pitch by a mad life-guardsman, who went about exhorting to repentance, and predicting that, on the 5th of April, London and Westminster would be wholly destroyed. His predictions had at least one beneficial effect, that of filling the churches and emptying the gin-shops. When the supposed fatal hour arrived, the roads were thronged with thousands, who were flying into the eountry; so numerous were the fugitives that lodgings could hardly be obtained at Windsor, and many were obliged to sit in their eoaches all night. Others, who had not the means of retiring to a distanee, or whose fears were

less violent, lay in boats all night, or waited in crowds in the open fields round the metropolis, till the dreadful moment was passed by, till the broad daylight showed them at once the city still uninjured, and the disgraceful absurdity of their own conduct.

Considering the period at which it took place, when the failure of Brothers was yet recent, and the success which it nevertheless met with, the imposture of Joanna Southcott may be deemed as remarkable as any that has occurred. Though her claims to inspiration have been trampled in the dust by death, there are still some who insanely look forward to the completion of prophecies as ridiculous as they were blasphemous.

Notwithstanding thousands, from all parts of England, looked on Joanna Southcott with reverence and gratitude, as the means through which salvation would be effected, there does not appear anything remarkable, in her character or her history, to give a colour to her extraordinary pretensions. Joanna was born in April 1750, the daughter of a small farmer in Devonshire; for many years she lived as a servant in Exeter, and her character was irreproachable; from her early years she delighted in the study of the scriptures, and was accustomed on all interesting occasions to apply *directly* to Heaven for advice; and she affirmed that, sooner or later, an answer was always returned by outward signs or inward feelings. During her probationary state, as it may be called, she had many temptations, which she was strengthened to resist and overcome.

After she had drawn the attention of the world by her prophecies and writings, great pains were taken to ascertain the truth of her commission. "From the end of 1792," says Mr. Sharpe, the most devout

of her believers, "to the end of 1794, her writings were sealed up with great caution, and remained secure till they were conveyed by me to High House, Paddington; and the box which contained them was opened in the beginning of January 1803. Her writings were examined during seven days, and the result of this long scrutiny was, the unanimous decision of twenty-three persons *appointed by divine command*, as well as of thirty-five others that were present, *that her calling was of God.*" They came to this conclusion from the fulfilment of the prophecies contained in these writings, and to which she appealed with confidence and triumph. It was a curious circumstance, however, that her handwriting was illegible. Her remark on this occasion was, "This must be, to fulfil the Bible. Every vision that John saw in heaven must take place on earth; and here is the sealed book, that no one can read!"

A protection was provided for all those who subscribed their names as volunteers, for the destruction of Satan's kingdom. To every subscriber a folded paper was delivered, endorsed with his name, and secured with the impression of Joanna's seal in red wax: this powerful talisman consisted of a circle inclosing the two letters J. C., with a star above and below, and the following words, "The sealed of the Lord, the Elect, Precious, Man's Redemption, to inherit the tree of life, to be made heirs of God and joint-heirs of Jesus Christ." The whole was authenticated by the signature of the prophetess in her illegible characters, and the person thus provided was said to be *sealed*. Conformably, however, to the 7th chapter of the Revelation, the number of those highly protected persons was not to exceed 144,000.

The great object of her mission was to bring forth

a son, the Shiloh, promised to be born of a virgin; and this event had been looked forward to by her followers with unbounded enthusiasm and credulity. Disappointment, more than once, appeared inevitable: the period, however, at last was said to draw nigh, she being *sixty-four* years of age. As she laboured under more than the usual indisposition incidental to pregnancy, and it was deemed necessary to satisfy worldly doubts, medical men were called in, to give a professional opinion, as to the fact, from a consideration of all the symptoms, and without reference to miraculous agency. Some asserted their belief that she was pregnant; others disbelieved and ridiculed the idea.

One of these gentlemen, Mr. Mathias, published his view of the case. He was informed that Joanna was sixty-four years old, *a virgin*, and pregnant with the expected son. Appearing incredulous, as he well might, he was asked "If he would believe when he saw the infant at the breast?" He protested against opinions so blasphemous, and cautioned them to be wary how they proceeded, and to consider the consequences of attempting a delusion so mischievous upon the ignorant and credulous. His further attendance was declined, as she had been answered, "That he had drawn a wrong judgment of her disorder." In Mr. Mathias's opinion, notoriety, ease and affluence, appeared to be the prevailing passions of Joanna's mind, and the means she adopted to fulfil her desires would seem, and actually proved, well calculated to answer her end. She passed much of her time in bed in downy indolence, she ate much and often, and prayed never; when she would have it she was with child, she, like other ladies in that situation, had longings; on one occasion she longed for asparagus, when it was by no

means a cheap article of food; and so strong was her longing, that she is said to have eaten one hundred and sixty heads before she allayed it. At this period, shoals of enthusiasts, with more money than wit, poured into the metropolis to behold this chosen vessel.

Mr. Richard Reece was now consulted by Joanna Southcott, on the subject of her pregnancy. It does not appear that he was a proselyte to her religious views, but he was probably deluded and deceived, by the enumeration of physical symptoms. At all events, he was prevailed on to avow his belief of her being pregnant, by some means or other; and a numerous deputation of her followers, who appeared a motley group of all persuasions, waited upon him to receive the happy intelligence from his own lips. By this conduct he seems to have acquired great favour in her sight, for he continued in attendance till her death.

When her supposed time of deliverance from her precious burden approached, Joanna felt alarmingly ill, and her fears, either conquering her fanaticism or awakening her conscience, began to make her suspect that her inspiration was deceptious. A few weeks before her death, her misgivings gave rise to the following scene, which is described by Mr. Reece, who was present. Five or six of her friends, who were waiting in an adjoining room, being admitted into her bed-chamber, "she desired them (says Mr. Reece) to be seated round her bed; when, spending a few minutes in adjusting the bed-clothes with seeming attention, and placing before her a white handkerchief, she thus addressed them, as nearly as I can recollect, in the following words: 'My friends, some of you have known me nearly twenty-five years, and all of you not less than twenty; when you have heard me speak of my prophecies, you have sometimes heard me say that

I doubted my inspiration. But at the same time you would never let me despair. When I have been alone, it has often appeared delusion; but when the communication was made to me, I did not in the least doubt. Feeling, as I now do feel, that my dissolution is drawing near, and that a day or two may terminate my life, it all appears delusion.'—She was by this exertion quite exhausted, and wept bitterly. On reviving in a little time, she observed that it was very extraordinary, that, after spending all her life in investigating the Bible, it should please the Lord to inflict that heavy burden on her. She concluded this discourse, by requesting that everything on this occasion might be conducted with decency. She then wept; and all her followers present seemed deeply affected, and some of them shed tears. 'Mother,' said one (I believe Mr. Howe), 'we will commit your instructions to paper, and rest assured they shall be conscientiously followed.' They were accordingly written down with much solemnity, and signed by herself, with her hand placed on the Bible in the bed. This being finished, Mr. Howe again observed to her, 'Mother, your feelings are *human;* we know that you are a favourite woman of God, and that you will produce the promised child; and whatever you may say to the contrary will not diminish our faith.' This assurance revived her, and the scene of crying was changed with her to laughter.

Mr. Howe was not the only one of her disciples whose sturdy belief was not to be shaken by the most discouraging symptoms. Colonel Harwood, a zealous believer, intreated Mr. Reece not to retract his opinion as to her pregnancy, though the latter now saw the folly and absurdity of it; and when the colonel approached the bed on which she was about to expire,

and she said to him, "What does the Lord mean by this? I am certainly dying;" he replied, smiling, "No, no, you will not die, or if you should, you will return again."

Even when she was really dead, the same blind confidence remained. Mrs. Townley, with whom she had lived, said cheerfully, "she would return to life, for it had been foretold twenty years before." Mr. Sharpe also asserted that the soul of Joanna would return, it having gone to heaven to legitimate the child which would be born. Though symptoms of decomposition arose, Mr. Sharpe still persisted in keeping the body hot, according to the directions which she had given on her death-bed, in the hope of a revival. Mr. Reece having remarked that, if the ceremony of her marriage continued two days longer, the tenement would not be habitable on her return, "The greater will be the miracle," said Mr. Sharpe. Consent at last was given to inspect the body, and all the disciples stood round smoking tobacco; their disappointment was excessive at finding nothing to warrant the long-cherished opinion, but their faith remained immoveable. More than twenty years have elapsed since her death, yet many persons are still infatuated enough to avow themselves believers in her supernatural mission.

The most recent thaumaturgist with whom we are acquainted bears no less a title than that of prince, and worked his wonders within the last thirteen years. The personage in question is Prince Alexander Hohenlohe, whose miracles have made much noise in the world, and given rise to no small portion of angry controversy. His highness, who appears to have previously been practising with much success in Germany, first became generally known in this country by an extraordinary cure which he was said to have

performed on a nun, at the convent of New Hall, near Chelmsford, in Essex. It must be premised, that it was by no means necessary for him to see or be near his patient; prayers being the sole means which he employed. Accordingly, he did not stir from his residence at Bamberg. The nun at New Hall had for a year and a half been afflicted with an enormous and painful swelling of the right hand and arm, which resisted every medical application. In this emergency, the superior of the convent applied for the aid of Prince Hohenlohe. The answer which he returned seems to prove that he was a pious though a mistaken man. It also affords some insight into the cause of the effect which was undoubtedly sometimes produced. "At eight o'clock on the third of May, I will, in compliance with your request, offer up my prayers for your recovery. At the same hour, after having confessed and taken the sacrament, join your prayers also, with that evangelical fervour, and *that entire faith*, which we owe to our Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Stir up from the very bottom of your heart the divine virtues of true repentance, Christian charity, *a boundless belief that your prayers will be granted*, and a steadfast resolution to lead an exemplary life, to the end that you may continue in a state of grace." Whatever may be thought of his miraculous pretensions, it is impossible to deny that his exhortation was praiseworthy. The following account of the result is given by Dr. Badelly, the physician to the convent:—"On the third of May (says he) she went through the religious process prescribed by the prince. Mass being nearly ended, Miss O'Connor not finding the immediate relief which she expected, exclaimed, 'Thy will be done, O Lord! thou hast not thought me worthy of this cure.'

Almost immediately after, she felt an extraordinary sensation through the whole arm, to the ends of her fingers. The pain instantly left her, and the swelling gradually subsided; but it was some weeks before the hand resumed its natural shape and size."

Other cures, still more marvellous, are said to have followed in rapid succession. Requests for assistance now poured in so rapidly from all quarters, that he was nearly overwhelmed. On an average he received daily fifty letters. As it was physically impossible for him to attend to every individual application, a vast majority of his suitors must have gone without the benefit of his curative powers, had he not fortunately hit upon a plan to accommodate all comers. His new arrangement consisted in "adopting a system of offering his prayers for the relief of particular districts, on particular days." For instance, seven o'clock in the morning, on the first of August, was appointed for curing all the diseased in Ireland, and notice was given to all the religious communities in that island, that it would be proper for each of them, at the same hour, to perform a mass. This delusion flourished for a considerable time; but it gradually died away, and, for some years past, nothing more has been heard of Prince Alexander Hohenlohe's miracle-working intercession.

## CHAPTER IV.

ROMAN-CATHOLIC SUPERSTITIONS, &c.

Account of Pope Joan—Artifice of Pope Sextus V.—Some Christian Ceremonies borrowed from the Jews and Pagans—Melting of the Blood of St. Januarius—Addison's opinion of it—Description of the Performance of the Miracle—Miraculous Image of Our Saviour at Rome—Ludicrous Metamorphosis of a Statue—Relics—Head of St. John the Baptist—Sword of Balaam—St. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins—Self-Tormenting—Penances of St. Dominic the Cuirassier—The Crusades—Their Cause and Progress, and the immense numbers engaged in them.

THERE appears to have been, on the one hand, an extensive belief in the existence of a female Pope Joan, while, on the other, many eminent writers have been anxious to relieve the papal chair of such a scandal.

By the believers in her existence, Joan is affirmed to have worn the tiara between Leo IV. who died 855, and Benedict III. who died 858. Anastatius the library keeper, in that age, does not appear to have made mention of this she-pope; but Marianus Scotus observes, under the year 855, that Joan, a woman, succeeded Leo IV. during two years five months and four days.

Joan, whose original name we are told was Gilberta, is said to have been a native of Mentz, in Germany, and to have received an excellent education. Falling in love with a young Englishman, a monk at Fulda, she assumed male attire to obtain admittance into the monastery where he resided. They subsequently eloped, and travelled through many countries.

Their time, however, was not wholly devoted to "love and love's disport;" for they are said to have

omitted no opportunity of acquiring knowledge, and, among other places, to have studied at Athens. Her lover having died, she repaired to Rome, still disguised as a man: she was extremely witty, and had a graceful way of arguing at disputations and public lessons; so that many were equally surprised at her learning, and delighted by her manner. She gained such friendship and good-will, that, after the death of Leo, she was chosen Pope, and performed all the acts and ceremonies Popes are wont to do.

Whilst she was Pope, she became pregnant by one of her chaplains; and as she was going in solemn procession to the Church of the Lateran, she was delivered in the midst of the city, in the great square, and in the presence of all the people. She died on the spot, and was buried without papal pomp, or any of the usual honours. Her sudden death was said by some to be a judgment for her crime; and it was added, that, by a divine notification sent down to her, she had the choice of undergoing such a public exposure here, and obtaining pardon hereafter, or passing through life tranquilly, and incurring a future dreadful responsibility.

It has been maintained by others that Pope John the Eighth manifesting much imbecility and cowardice, the people thought he should rather be called a woman than a man; thence arose the unfounded report, that a woman was in reality elected Pope. The general belief, however, is, that the whole story is an utterly groundless fabrication.

Pope Sixtus the Fifth, when he first came to Rome, was constrained to beg alms, but, by his abilities, he at last raised himself to the Popedom. When he first aspired to that dignity, while he was yet a Cardinal, he counterfeited illness and old age for fifteen years.

During the conclave which was assembled to create a Pope, he continually leaned on his crutch, and very frequently interrupted the sage deliberations of the conclave by a hollow cough and violent spitting. This scheme took so well that the Cardinals fell into the trap; and every one thinking that, by electing Sixtus, he might himself stand a chance of being in a short time elected, he was unanimously chosen. As soon as the election was concluded, the new Pope performed a miracle; his legs became vigorous, his body, that had been before curved, became firm and erect, his cough was dissipated; and he showed, in a short time, of what he was capable.

It cannot be denied but that Christianity is adorned with the spoils of Judaism and Paganism: our best authors are of that opinion; among others Duchoul, at the end of his treatise concerning the religion of the old Romans, ingenuously owns the conformity there is between the ceremonies of the Christians and those of the Romans and Egyptians. Such being the case, it will not be thought extraordinary that many of the modern miracles, so famed in Italy, should be the identical prodigies of former times; for, in order to accelerate the conversion of the Gentiles, the first Popes found it necessary to dissemble, and to wink at many things, so as to effect a compromise between the original superstition and the modern creed.

The melting of the blood of St. Januarius, at Naples, when, with great solemnity, it is applied to his head, on the day of his festival—whilst at other times it continues dry in the glass—is one of the standing and authentic miracles of Italy; yet Mr. Addison, who twice saw it performed, says that, instead of appearing to be a real miracle, he thought it one of the most bungling tricks he had ever seen, and believed it to be

copied from a similar heathen miracle, the melting of the incense, without the help of fire, at Gnatia, as described by Horace in his journey to Brundusium:

> Dum, flammâ sine, thura liquescere limine sacro
> Persuadere cupit.

Another eye-witness to the same miracle, Dr. Duan, says, "he approached through the crowd till he got close to the bust of St. Januarius. The archbishop had been attempting to perform the miracle, and an old monk stood by, who was at the utmost pains to instruct him how to handle, chafe, and rub the bottle which contained the blood. He frequently also took it in his own hands, but his manœuvres were as ineffectual as those of the archbishop, who was all over in a profuse sweat with vexation and exertion, fearing lest the people might interpret so unpropitious an omen against him. The old monk, with a genuine expression of chagrin, exclaimed, 'Cospetto di Bacco, e dura come una pietra.' An universal gloom overspread the multitude. Some were in a rage at the saint's obstinacy, and called his head an ungrateful yellow-faced rascal. It was now almost dark, and, when least expected, the signal was given that the miracle was performed. A Roman Catholic, who remained close by the archbishop, assured me this miracle failed altogether; the bottle was turned with a rapid motion before the eyes of the spectators, who would not contradict that which they were all expecting to see."

An image of our Saviour is shown at Rome, which, some time before the sacking of that city, wept so heartily, that the good fathers of the monastery were all employed in wiping its face with cotton; thus following the example of the statue of Apollo, which, according to Livy, wept for three days and nights

successively. This phenomenon resembles another, which is recorded respecting a statue of Orpheus, in Libethra, which was made of cypress wood. When Alexander the Great was on the point of setting out upon his expedition, various omens occurred; among them, this statue was in a profuse sweat for several days. Aristander, the soothsayer, gave a favourable interpretation to this apparent indication of fear, by saying it was emblematic of the labour the poets and historians would have to undergo, to celebrate the actions of the Macedonian monarch.

Mrs. Piozzi mentions a ludicrous metamorphosis of one statue at Rome. "A beautiful statue of Diana," says she, "with her trussed-up robes, the crescent alone wanting, stands on the high altar to receive homage in the character of St. Agnes, in a pretty church dedicated to her (fuor della porte), where it is supposed she suffered martyrdom, and why? for not venerating that very goddess Diana, and for refusing to walk in her processions at the new moons. 'Such contradictions put one from oneself,' as Shakspeare saith."

The incredible absurdities of some of the assertions made by the possessors of sacred relics, ought to have been sufficient, in the name of common sense, to convict them of imposture. What can be at once more ridiculous and irreligious than the following? The monastery of St. Benedict, in France, had for time immemorial been supposed to possess that invaluable relic, the head of John the Baptist. Many years since, however, the monastery of St. Francis overthrew their claim, by declaring, that in their dormitory, they had discovered the genuine caput: and one of the friars testifying to its being the real head, in the most solemn manner asserted that when, in a holy fervour,

he frequently kissed the lips, he found they still retained the flavour of locusts and wild honey. So strong a proof there was no withstanding; the claim of St. Francis was admitted, and established by the conclave. The recital of one forgery only recals another, and it would be easy to recount well-authenticated tales which would fill a volume. An exhibitor of holy relics showed with much veneration the sword with which Balaam smote his ass.* Being reminded that scripture only recorded Balaam's wish for such a weapon, he adroitly replied, "Ay, and this is the sword he wished for."

Those who have through motives of curiosity visited many of the shrines abroad may have remarked an incredulity often lurking about the countenances of the holy men who exhibit them: the bolder, indeed, will openly laugh, when questioned as to their own belief on these subjects.

The vulgar, however, have generally too much credulity to be sufficiently competent to judge of the truth or falsehood of what is set before them, and too many evidences still exist of their folly with regard to relics.

Cologne, on account of its numerous religious houses,

* Balaam's Ass, may remind the reader of the "Feast of the Ass." In several churches in France they used to celebrate a festival, in commemoration of the Virgin Mary's flight into Egypt. It was called the Feast of the Ass. A young girl richly dressed, with a child in her arms, was set upon an Ass superbly caparisoned. The Ass was led to the altar in solemn procession, High Mass was said with great pomp, the Ass was taught to kneel at proper places, a hymn, no less childish than impious, was sung in his praise, and when the ceremony was ended, the priest, instead of the usual words with which he dismissed the people, brayed three times like an Ass; and the people, instead of the usual response, "We bless the Lord," brayed three times in the same manner. Vide Du Cange, voc. Festum, Vol. 3, p. 424.

relics, &c. was called the Holy City. The chapel of St. Ursula there became very famous, for being the depository of her bones and those of the eleven thousand virgins, her companions, who came from England in a little boat to convert the Huns, who had taken possession of Cologne in 640, and who, unmoved by the sweet eloquence of so many virgins, quickly silenced their arguments by putting them all to death. Some doubt arose many years since, whether any country could have spared so many virgins: and a surgeon, somewhat of a wag, upon examination of the consecrated bones, declared that most of them were the bones of full-grown female mastiffs—for which discovery he was expelled the city.

The horrors of Hindoo penance may be thought equalled by the voluntary sufferings of some of the earlier saints in the calendar, when fanaticism and ignorant credulity went hand in hand. The most remarkable of these early fanatics was, perhaps, St. Dominic the Cuirassier, thus named from an iron cuirass which he wore next his skin, and which was never taken off, till it was necessary to replace it by a new one. Conceiving that he had incurred the guilt of simony, he not only refrained from performing mass, but resolved to do penance the rest of his life; the result of this determination is so well described in the pages of a leading periodical,* that it is transferred with slight condensation.

The first step towards this perpetual penance was, to enter into the congregation of Santa Croce Fonte Avellana, whose exercises were so rigorous that one of their amusements was to flog each other after the services. It was a general belief that the pains of

* Quarterly Review, July 1819; art. "British Monachism, by D. Fosbrooke."

purgatory might be mitigated by certain acts of penance and an indulgence from the Pope.

The monks of Santa Croce determined that thirty psalms, said or sung, with an obligato accompaniment of one hundred stripes to each psalm, making in all three thousand, would be received as a set-off for one year's purgatory: the whole psalter, with fifteen thousand stripes, would redeem five years from the vast crucible, and twenty psalters, with three hundred thousand stripes fairly entered, would be equal to a receipt in full for one hundred years.

This Dominic the Cuirassier, being very ambitious, tasked himself generally at ten psalters and thirty thousand lashes a day, at which rate he would have redeemed three thousand six hundred and fifty years of purgatory per annum. In addition to this, however, he used to petition for a supplementary task of a hundred years. Being, as he hoped, already a creditor to a large amount in the angel's books, and as no good works can be lost, he recited and lashed away, for the benefit of the great sinking fund of the catholic church, with more spirit than ever. During one Lent he entreated for, and obtained, the imposition of a thousand years; and St. Pietro Damiano affirms that, in these forty days, he actually recited the psalter two hundred times, and inflicted sixty millions of stripes; working away with a scourge in each hand. In an heroic mood he once determined to flog himself, in the jockey phrase, against time, and at the end of twenty-four hours had gone through the psalms twelve times, and begun them the thirteenth, the quota of stripes being one hundred and eighty-three thousand, reducing purgatory stock sixty-one years, twelve days, and thirty-three minutes. It still remains to be proved, how he could recite verses and

count lashes at the same time, or consistently have continued to wear his cuirass, which would have nullified the infliction of so many stripes.

There is no event in the history of the religious opinions of mankind more singular than that of the Crusades; every circumstance that tends to explain, or give any rational account of, this extraordinary frenzy of delusion in the human mind is interesting. In the account which follows, that which is given from the elegant pen of Dr. Robertson, in his Life of the Emperor Charles V., has been taken advantage of.

The Crusades, or expeditions to rescue the Holy Land out of the hands of Infidels, seemed to be the first event that roused Europe from the lethargy in which it had been long sunk, and that tended to introduce any considerable change in government, or in manners. It is natural to the human mind to view those places which have been distinguished by being the residence of any illustrious personage, or the scene of any great transaction, with some degree of delight and veneration. To this principle must be ascribed the superstitious devotion with which Christians, from the earliest ages of the church, were accustomed to visit that country, which the Almighty had selected as the inheritance of his favourite people, and in which the Son of God had accomplished the redemption of mankind.

As this distant pilgrimage could not be performed without considerable expense, fatigue, and danger, it appeared the more meritorious, and came to be considered as an expiation for almost every crime. An opinion which spread with rapidity over Europe, about the close of the tenth and beginning of the eleventh century, and which gained universal credit,

wonderfully augmented the number of credulous pilgrims, and increased the ardour with which they undertook this useless voyage.

The thousand years, mentioned by St. John in the twentieth chapter of Revelations, were supposed to be accomplished, and the end of the world to be at hand. A general consternation seized mankind: many relinquished their possessions; and abandoning their friends and families, hurried with precipitation to the Holy Land, where they imagined that Christ would quickly appear to judge the world.

This belief was so universal, and so strong, that it mingled itself with civil transactions. Many charters, in the latter part of the tenth century, began in this manner: "Appropinquante mundi termino," &c.—"As the end of the world is now at hand, and by various calamities and judgments the signs of its approach are now manifest."

While Palestine continued subject to the caliphs, they had encouraged the resort of pilgrims to Jerusalem; and considered this as a beneficial species of commerce, which brought into their dominions gold and silver, and carried nothing out of them but relics and consecrated trinkets. But the Turks having conquered Syria, about the middle of the eleventh century, pilgrims were exposed to outrages of every kind from these fierce barbarians.

This change, happening precisely at the juncture when the panic terror above mentioned rendered pilgrimages most frequent, filled Europe with alarm and indignation. Every person who returned from Palestine related the dangers which he had encountered in visiting the holy city, and described with exaggeration the cruelty and vexations of the Turks.

When the minds of men were thus prepared, the

zeal of a fanatical monk, who conceived the idea of leading all the forces of Christendom against the infidels, and of driving them out of the Holy Land by violence, was sufficient to give a beginning to that wild enterprise. Peter the Hermit, for that was the name of this martial apostle, ran from province to province, with a crucifix in his hand, exciting princes and people to this holy war, and wherever he came he kindled the same enthusiastic ardour for it with which he himself was animated. The Council of Placentia, where upwards of thirty thousand persons were assembled, pronounced the scheme to have been suggested by the immediate inspiration of Heaven. In the council of Clermont, still more numerous, as soon as the measure was proposed, all cried out with one voice, "It is the will of God!" Persons of all ranks caught the contagion: not only the gallant nobles of that age, with their martial followers, whom we may suppose apt to be allured by the boldness of a romantic enterprise, but men in more humble and pacific stations in life, ecclesiastics of every order, and even women and children, engaged with emulation in an undertaking which was deemed meritorious and even sacred.

If we may believe the concurring testimony of contemporary authors, six millions of persons assumed the cross, which was the badge that distinguished such as devoted themselves to this holy warfare. All Europe, says the Princess Anna Comnena, torn up from the foundation, seemed ready to precipitate itself in one united body upon Asia. Nor did the fumes of this enthusiastic zeal evaporate at once: the frenzy was as lasting as it was extravagant. During two centuries Europe seems to have had no object but to recover, or keep possession, of the Holy

Land, and through that period vast armies continued to march thither.

As Constantinople was the place of rendezvous for all the armies of the crusaders, this brought together the people of the East and West as to one great interview; and several authors, witnesses of this singular congress of people, formerly strangers, describe with simplicity and candour the impression which that new spectacle made upon their own minds.

The first efforts of valour, animated by enthusiasm, were irresistible; part of the Lesser Asia, all Syria, and Palestine, were wrested from the infidels: the banner of the cross was displayed on Mount Sion: Constantinople, the capital of the Christian empire in the East, was afterwards seized by a body of those adventurers who had taken arms against the Mahometans: and an Earl of Flanders and his descendants kept possession of the imperial throne during half a century. But, though the first impression of the crusaders was so unexpected that they made their conquests with comparative ease, they found infinite difficulty in preserving them. Establishments so distant from Europe, surrounded by warlike nations animated with fanatical zeal scarcely inferior to that of the crusaders themselves, were perpetually in danger of being overturned. Before the expiration of the thirteenth century the Christians were driven out of all their Asiatic possessions, in acquiring of which incredible numbers of men had perished, and immense sums of money had been wasted. The only common enterprise in which the European nations ever engaged, and which they all undertook with equal ardour, remains a singular monument of human folly.

# CHAPTER V.

HINDOO AND OTHER ORIENTAL SUPERSTITIONS.

Gross Superstition of the Hindoo Religion—The Brahmins and their Privileges—Immolation of Widows—Ceremonies and fanatical Sacrifices at Jaggernaut—Pilgrimages to Hurdwar—Sacred Character of the Waters of the Ganges—Follies committed by Hindoo Devotees—Tortures which they inflict on themselves—A Youth induced to sacrifice himself to Bhyroo by a supposed Vision—Mutilation to propitiate the Goddess Kali-Ghat—Wild Superstitions of the Malays—Spirits in which the Malays believe—Pontianaks—Tuju Jindang—The Polong—Mode of exercising the Polong—The Penangalam—Charms to obtain Revenge on Enemies—The Tuju and the Tuju Jantong—The Panaw, a Charm of the Mahometan Malays—Desperate Conduct of a Man who wore a Panaw—Incantations of the Shamans, or Priests in Siberia.

The religion of India has, from time immemorial, been based on the grossest superstition, and has never varied in its character. The unchangeable nature of this, like all the other Indian institutions, is to be ascribed to the division of the people into castes, and the penalties of excommunication, attached to the loss of caste, rendering each extremely cautious of forfeiting its privileges.

The Brahmins, or order of priests, exerted an extraordinary influence on all the other castes; and so conscious were they of their own pre-eminence both in rank and sanctity, that they deemed it degradation and pollution to eat of the same food with their sovereign. Their persons were sacred, and even for the most heinous crimes they could not be capitally punished; their blood was never to be shed; and in some accounts preserved in India, princes are mentioned, who, having violated the privileges of the castes, and disregarded the remonstrances of the

Brahmins, were deposed by their authority, and put to death.

The descriptions given by Alexander's officers, two thousand years since, exactly delineate customs now prevalent in India; namely, that the inhabitants, for the most part, lived on vegetable food, and that the widows burned themselves on the funeral piles of their husbands; and many other particulars equally accordant. Numerous attempts have been made to abolish, or at least check, the horrid custom of burning widows alive, and in some instances the intended victims have been saved; the interference of the priests has doubtless been less direct and efficacious when under the eye of the English authorities, but in a multitude of cases they have goaded the widow to self-immolation by the promises of eternal happiness hereafter, by the refusal of which she was also warned that she would doom herself to the contempt and neglect of all her former associates.

One of the most celebrated of the Hindoo shrines is that at Jaggernaut, to which an immense throng of pilgrims resort, at the time of the annual festival, in honour of the deity to whom the temple is consecrated, in some years to the number of more than one hundred and fifty thousand. The Ruth Jatra, or riding of the gods, is at once cruel and indecent. Their carriage, of immense height and size, supported on sixteen wheels, is drawn along by thousands of fanatics, many of whom fall down voluntarily before its wheels, and are crushed to death; thus instantly, as they believe, entering a blessed immortality.

Through all parts of India the waters of the Ganges are considered sacred, and Hurdwar, the spot where its stream first issues from the mountains into the plains, is particularly sacred; and every year,

at the full of the moon of April, but more especially every twelfth year, an immense concourse of people assemble near it for the purpose of ablution in the holy stream. The year 1783 was one of the twelfth years, deemed peculiarly propitious, and the body of pilgrims collected was unusually great, amounting, as was supposed, to between one and two millions. The custom of the pilgrims is to repair to the bed of the river, where they pass the night with little or no shelter, though the temperature is variable. From such exposure, and the privations attendant on such multitudes collected together, a species of cholera broke out, which in less than eight days cut off above twenty thousand victims.

Many thousands of people are employed in carrying the water of the Ganges, at Hurdwar, to princes and persons of distinction in all parts of India, and it is drunk at feasts as well as on religious occasions. When a sick person's life is despaired of, he is carried to the bank of this sacred stream, exposed to storm or sun, his mouth, nose, and ears closely stuffed with mud, and thus suffocated.

More individual cases of absurd and disgusting fanaticism occur in the Hindoo religion than, probably, in all the other religions in the world. The number and rigour of the mortifications, the excruciating penances which these Indian devotees voluntarily undergo, and the high opinion which the people entertain of their sanctity, have struck all travellers who have visited India. In making a pilgrimage to Hurdwar, one zealous devotee performed a journey of some hundred miles, prostrating himself, and measuring every inch of the way, with his body, as he advanced; some will remain so long in one position as to be incapable of moving their limbs ever after. At

the annual ceremonies which take place, all over India, numbers swing themselves on a rope by means of a hook passed through the muscles of the back, continuing this exercise for a long time. Some, having erected poles to form a sort of gibbet over a pit, wherein they have lighted a fire, ascend the poles, after many ceremonies; then, twisting ropes about the feet, suspend themselves with their head downwards, their face towards the flame, and thus swing themselves up and down, like a bell, increasing the fire by throwing wood into it, placed within their reach; this they keep up for half-an-hour together, at each time swinging directly over the flames. It would be almost impossible to conceive the tortures which these maniacs inflict on themselves, from a mistaken principle of religion conjoined with pride; as they are the more esteemed in proportion to the austerities and tortures they endure.

A striking instance of the fanaticism which inspires the votaries of the Hindoo deities was exhibited about ten years ago, at the annual fair of Ooncar, near the river Nerbuddah. A youth, not more than twenty years of age, came from Ougein, to devote himself at the shrine of Bhyroo, by leaping from a rock which impends over the Nerbuddah. He stated as the cause of his resolution that, six weeks previously to his visiting Ooncar, while he was sleeping near a temple in the neighbourhood of Ougein, a smart blow on the shoulder awoke him; he looked round, and saw a cocoa-nut, a knife, and a looking-glass. Casting his eye on the glass, he became conscious of the presence of Bhyroo, who commanded him to sacrifice himself at Ooncar, and told him that this was the last time he would be called upon. In obedience to this mandate, the deluded victim proceeded to the fatal spot. Some of the East India Company's officers en-

deavoured to dissuade him from his purpose, but he was deaf to their arguments, even though they were backed by an offer of a provision for life. So determined was he to immolate himself, that, fearing force would be used to prevent him, he declared that he would destroy himself with a knife, which he constantly carried about him.

On the morning which he had fixed upon for this suicidal act, he went early to the temple of Bhyroo, where the deity is typified by a huge stone, daubed with red paint. Here he went through the usual ceremonies, and made an offering of money. Another attempt was now made to prevail on him to desist. But all intreaties were unavailing. With a firm and rapid step, and an unaltered countenance, he proceeded to the summit of the rock. Standing on the brink of the precipice, he made a few wild gestures to the crowd below, and then threw down the knife, the cocoa-nut, and the glass. Having done this, he drew back a few paces, rushed forward, and sprang into the air. In a moment his lifeless and shattered remains were stretched at the foot of the rock.

Nearly at the same time, another sacrifice to the same sanguinary deity was voluntarily made, at Byrooghur, near Ougein. But, in this instance, the mode adopted was different; as the infatuated being chose to bury himself alive.

Mutilation, in order to propitiate the goddess Kali-Ghat, is no uncommon occurrence; though the practice has somewhat diminished of late years. The little finger is the customary offering to this amiable deity; but, a few years since, a Hindoo, ambitious to obtain the superiority over his less courageous brethren, cut out his tongue with a knife before the altar of the goddess.

The superstitions of the Malays are of a wild, ferocious, and sanguinary character, in unison with that of the Malays themselves. That, filled as they are with ungovernable passions, they should be firm believers in the existence of malignant spirits, cannot be a matter of wonder. Two or three specimens of these demons may be not unamusing.

The spirits called Pontianaks are supposed to be the children of people born after death. The shape which they assume is usually that of a bird; sometimes white, at other times marked like a magpie; but in Java always entirely black. Hair, not feathers, forms their covering. They have the power of assuming the shapes of animals, and even of man; and often by this means entrap their unsuspecting victims. Each Pontianak has two servants, an owl and a species of caterpillar, which they send on their ungodly errands. A moonlight night is the time which the Pontianak chooses for its mischievous excursions. It then pursues men who are walking alone, and kills young children, and sucks their blood: women, however, it never molests. To hurt or catch them is nearly impossible; but a man is said to have once obtained, by some means or other, a single hair of one of them, his possession of which compelled the spirit to bring him as much gold as he wanted. The cunning fiend contrived to get back the hair, and the gold which he had given to the man immediately disappeared.

Another Malay demon is the Tuju Jindang, which is made subservient to Malay revenge. This miniature fiend takes the form of a silk-worm, is reared in a new vessel, and fed upon roasted paddy. When any one wishes to injure his enemy, he performs the needful mysteries, and says to the creature, "Go and eat the heart and entrails of such an one." The in-

sect then flies on its mission. It usually effects an entrance into its victim on the back of the hand, or between the shoulders, and the spot turns blue. Nothing is visible when it first strikes, and the feeling which it causes is merely like the touch of a bird flying against a man. It soon, however, inflicts the fiercest torments on the sufferer, gradually eats out his internal parts, and the body becomes blue all over. Having accomplished its work of mischief, it returns to its keeper, to wait for another task.

Two fiends of a similar nature are described by a writer in the Indo-Chinese Gleaner; they are denominated the Polong and the Panangalam. With respect to the Polong, the Malays say that it is conveyed down from parents to children. According to their own laws it is death to keep one. It is believed to be invisible, and is kept in a small earthen bottle with a neck, and a hole large enough to admit a finger. Human blood is its food. About once or twice a-week, on the night of either Monday or Friday, the keeper cuts the tip of his finger, puts it into the vessel, and lets the Polong suck his fill. It is rather dangerous to neglect doing this; for, in such a case, the Polong issues from his concealment, and indemnifies himself for his fast by sucking the body till the skin becomes black and blue all over. The fiend is generally kept by females, seldom by males. Women have, indeed, a strong temptation to harbour him; for he has the valuable property of making his possessor, even though she be ugliness itself, seem surprisingly beautiful in the eyes of all who behold her.

When the keeper of the Polong, or his friend, or the person who bribes him, is desirous of tormenting an enemy, the spirit is let loose upon the object. "The marks of possession are many. As soon as

the Polong enters the man, he first falls down screaming, unconscious to himself and to every thing about him; sometimes he becomes speechless and like a dead man; sometimes there is no appearance of ailment, but his conversation is incoherent; sometimes he falls to beating all about him. Sometimes, as soon as he enters into any one, the person possessed dies. The Polong always adheres exactly to his orders, and inflicts that punishment which is commanded him. Sometimes, though but seldom, it proves infectious, viz., in the following way, when the possessed falls down in a fit, and another asks him saying, 'What! what is the matter? what, have you got a Polong?' The person asking is affected, falls down insensible, and remains in the same state with the other till the Polong is expelled. A person seriously assured the writer that he had seen men and women, to the number of twenty, thus affected at the same time.

"The people are so well acquainted with the power of this Polong, that as soon as they see any one suffering they send immediately for the physician, an adept in the occult sciences, who with an air of importance and learning, administers some medicine, or more frequently makes use of a charm. He draws a fantastical figure, which, as he pretends, is that of the demon, upon the inside of a white bason, pours water into it, and gives the sufferer to drink. Then he takes hold of the thumb (for fear the Polong should make his escape, that being the door by which he enters the body), and interrogates the man in the following manner. 'Why do you torment him?' Then the Polong, speaking through the man, replies, 'My *father* (for so he calls his keeper) has a grudge against him,' &c.—'Who is your father?' '——.' 'What has he told you to do?'—'To eat heart and

entrails' (this is a general term for torment). Sometimes the evil spirit braves all means, and refuses to speak; sometimes he tells lies, and confesses another name. When the soothsayer has prevailed against the evil spirit, and has heard his confession, he then tries to detect him (though a spirit, he has yet dimensions and shape); he feels the body all over, for he lurks between skin and flesh. Sometimes he finds him in an arm, sometimes behind the ear. Now for his expulsion. The soothsayer first exacts an oath of him that he has spoken nothing but truth, and also that he will never come again. Sometimes the physician has such power that he sends him back to torment his own keeper."

The Penangalam is an anomalous being, corporeal in its texture, yet possessed of supernatural powers. The literal meaning of its name is, "that which is pulled out." It is supposed to consist of a human head, neck, and intestines, joined to the trunk and limbs of a human body, which it can detach itself from, and return to, at pleasure. It is always in women that this demon dwells, and she by whom it is inhabited is supposed to be a friend of the devil, a witch, and by no means gifted with a love of chastity. The delight of the spirit is, when unobserved, to leave the trunk and legs behind, roam through the air, prey upon all manner of garbage, which is its favourite food, and suck the blood of those who have given it offence.

Among the superstitious practices by which the Malays strive to destroy their enemies are the Tuju, and the Tuju Jantong. The first of these words signifies "to point," and refers to the mode which is employed to perpetrate the mischief. The perpetrator makes, with certain mysterious ceremonies, a kind of

dagger, and recites over it a prayer. He then takes hold of the handle of the dagger, and thrusts towards the place where his enemy lives, as though he were stabbing an antagonist. As soon as this is done, his enemy becomes sick, and blood appears on the point of the dagger, which he sucks, exclaiming, "Now I am satisfied!" The victim is finally rendered speechless and dies.

The other superstition takes its name from the heart-shaped top of a newly opened branch of plantains, which bears the name of Jantong. He who seeks for revenge looks for a newly-opened plantain top, performs under it the appropriate mystery, ties the plantain, recites a prayer, and burns the point. The fire which consumes the plantain acts magically on the heart of the adversary, who consequently undergoes intolerable torture. When the avenger has satiated his revenge by keeping his foe a sufficient time in agony, he cuts the plantain, the heart of the devoted object falls down into his body, and he dies, with the blood gushing from his mouth.

Men who imagine themselves to be exposed to such attacks naturally endeavour to ward them off by counter-charms. Among these charms is one called the Panaw, which is implicitly confided in by the Malayan Mahometans. Panaw is the name given to light-coloured blotches on the skin of the Orientals; and the charm in question, which is in the form of a roll, and on paper, pretends to contain a representation of such blotches on the body of Mahomet. They may be had of all prices, from one to twenty dollars, according to the portion of good fortune which they ensure to the purchasers.

About ten years ago, a Panaw was found on the body of a Malay, who had attempted to murder two

persons. It was about four yards long, and two inches and a half broad, and was enclosed in a cloth case, to tie upon some part of the body. It contained many painted squares, representing the blotches of Mahomet, and was surmounted with rude figures of the temple of Mecca, the double-bladed sword of Ali, and other similar emblems of Islamism. Alternately with the painted squares were inscribed eighteen written paragraphs, promising to the wearer blessings of every kind in the utmost profusion. The cost of this scroll was eight dollars, and certainly never were the most important benefits sold at a cheaper rate. Of these benefits, a small specimen will perhaps be enough to satisfy the reader. "This," says the scroll, "is a Panaw of the superiority of the Apostle of God, peace be upon him! whoever looks at this Panaw of his superiority morning and evening, verily he will be beloved by all men, both high and low, and will be for ever happy, and his enemies will not be suffered to injure him; and God will finally take him to heaven without account. God is omniscient."

The man on whom this curious roll was found was a Malay merchant, Malim Dubalong by name, who had gained the appellation of Malim by his strict observance of all devotional exercises. Being accused of having robbed his guest to the amount of a thousand rupees, he was ordered to find bail. He was allowed to go home, but it being discovered that he was preparing to abscond, he was again ordered to be brought before the magistrate. Determined to take vengeance, he wrapped his naked kris or dagger in a handkerchief, concealed his kurumbi, a semicircular knife, under his head-dress, went to the river to wash, pray, and recite his incantations, and then bound his

roll of charms upon his arm. As this roll promised that, if the bearer looked at it night and morning, "none of his enemies would be permitted to injure him," he probably flattered himself that he would be able to accomplish his purpose without danger. He was, however, mistaken. As he was descending the stairs, at the magistrate's house, he suddenly fell on his accuser, and gave him, as he thought, a mortal stab with his kris. He then rushed up stairs again, and furiously assailed the magistrate. A severe struggle ensued, the assassin and the magistrate grappled each other, and, thus twined together, they rolled down stairs. Malim was immediately killed by the servants, whom the noise of the scuffle had brought to the spot; the magistrate escaped with only a few flesh wounds.

To give even the slightest sketch of the multifarious superstitions which exist in Asia would require a volume, instead of the few remaining pages of a chapter. One instance more must suffice. It is curious, not only as relating to tribes of which comparatively little is known, but also in consequence of the rite bearing, in some points, a striking resemblance to that of the Scape-goat of the Mosaic economy. The religion of various Siberian tribes is known by the name of Shamanism, its priests being called Shamans. Its sole object seems to be to procure temporal good or avert temporal evil. The ceremony in question, which is termed "the letting loose of the goat," was witnessed by Mr. Swan, a missionary at Selenginsk, in Siberia, in company with three of his assistants. "There were," says he, "two Shamans, men, present, or, as they are called, Boo, and two female Shamans or Odagan. A young man was sitting by the wall of the tent dressing the goat,

that is, fastening little brass rings, corals, and other ornaments, to its legs, neck, ears, &c. This occupied upwards of half an hour; two or three lighted lamps were placed on a table, at the west side of the tent, before the sheep-skin images. Before the table were placed the two Shaman sticks, called horses, being ornamented with the figure of a horse's head on the top, and hung round with a number of iron rings and flat slips of the same metal, which make a tinkling noise when the stick is moved. A sword was stuck into the ground beside them.

"The younger Shaman began the service by playing on a Jew's harp, the instrument the Shamans use to invoke the objects of their worship, and, as they say, to bring their minds into a fit state to hold intercourse with them. The harp was then handed to one of the Odagans, who began to play in the same strain. In the meantime the younger Shaman rose, laid aside his girdle, and hung a circular plate of brass round his neck. He then turned towards the table where the lamps were burning, and taking a taper in his hand, and waving it with a slow continued motion over the table, began to mutter, in a low tone, a kind of prayer or incantation. This was in the Mongolian language, but pronounced so indistinctly, that I could not understand a single word. This lasted fifteen or twenty minutes, and then seizing the two sticks, one in each hand, holding also the sword in his left hand, with its point to the ground, he turned towards the fire in the middle of the tent, muttering all the while his invocations. A wooden cup was then given him, and a man stood by with a vessel containing some milk. The milk was poured, in small portions, into the cup, and the Shaman threw the first part into the fire, then repeated portions out

of the hole in the tent, towards the east, west, south, and north. The Shaman then began to utter words in a louder tone, and to use more violent gesticulations. His whole frame became agitated, and after reeling about the tent for some time, he sat down in his place.

"The old Shaman, who was quite blind, and apparently very infirm, then rose, took the two sticks (omitting the sword) and began his prayers; at first his voice was low, and his motions were gentle, but as he continued to strike the ground with his two rattling sticks, he gradually became more active, and began to make strange noises, hissing like a cat, and growling like an angry dog; his legs then began to tremble, his whole body shook violently, and at last he began to jump with an agility and force which I did not think so feeble a man was capable of. This exertion lasted till he was quite exhausted, and he sank down upon the floor.

"The other Shaman rose a second time, and took his two sticks and sword. The people, who were crowded all round the tent, now drew back as far as possible, and the wooden posts, which partly supported the roof of the tent, were removed to allow more space for going round the fire. The man appeared now wrought up to a higher ecstacy: he walked, or rather staggered round the fire, leaning on the two sticks, and now and then jumping violently, and, to appearance, unconscious of the presence of any one. In the midst of these feats he threw off his boots, and began to rake out the burning cinders from the fire with his hands, and spread them by the side of the fire-place. He took up a piece of live charcoal, and held it for some time in his hand, but, as I could perceive, in a way that could not burn him. Next he began to dance upon the glowing embers with his naked feet,

but neither did this seem very extraordinary, for the quickness of the motion soon scattered the ashes, so that he could not be burnt.

" The last part of the farce, for such I consider it to be, was his laying down the two sticks, and reeling about with the sword in his hand, setting the point of it first against his side, and then against his breast. He had staggered towards the door, and placing the hilt of the sword against the wall, with the point of it to his breast, leaned and pushed against it, as if he had been forcing it into his body; at last it seemed to go in, and he writhed and twisted his body, as if he had been really pierced through, and was making efforts to draw the weapon out. To assist him in this, he went towards the young man, who had been all this while holding the goat; and the lad, taking hold of the handle of the sword, drew it with all his might. I observed, however, that the Shaman was holding it by the blade, and, after various struggles and contortions, he let it slip through his fingers, and so it seemed to be extracted from his body with a jerk. All this was performed with his back to the people present, and not one of them could see whether the sword entered the body or not; but I am persuaded the whole was mere trick; and Gendang, my writer, did not scruple openly to say so before them all, and taking the sword went through the whole ceremony of stabbing himself in the way of fun. This produced nothing but a smile from the spectators; and during the whole performances the people continued talking, laughing, and smoking their pipes with the greatest indifference.

" The old Shaman again rose, and went through his part much in the same way as before, but not so violently; sometimes he suddenly stopped, and turn-

ing round his blind eyes as if he wished to see something, mentioned a number of names, and inquired if such and such a one was well and happy. The other Shaman replied in a low voice, 'well.' Then were pronounced the names of their dead friends, and the old man pretended to see and converse with the spirits who had the charge of them in the invisible state.

"All these ceremonies were only preparatory to the letting loose of the goat; and now they began to talk of getting a horse provided for 'the fit man,' by whom the goat was to be sent away into the wilderness. Two other men were to go along with him, and the place to which the animal was to be taken was several versts distant, where there were no tents. On some occasions they told me, the Shaman strikes the goat with a sword, but they never kill it, and after it is let loose they never inquire after it; nor is it ever more seen, as no doubt it soon becomes the prey of the wolves.

"I wished to wait till the whole was concluded, but I understood that the Shamans were to repeat their tricks till day-break, and not till then was the animal to be sent away. I therefore returned home with my companions, not a little struck with these singular ceremonies. I could not learn that these Shamans had any reference to the expiation of sin in this service, nor that this scape-goat was considered as bearing away their iniquities. Their view of it rather is, that it is an offering very acceptable to the Ongoon, or spirits they worship—renders them propitious, and procures blessings upon their cattle and all their undertakings."

## CHAPTER VI.

### ROYAL IMPOSTORS.

Pretenders to Royalty numerous—Contest between the Houses of York and Lancaster gives rise to various Pretenders—Insurrection of Jack Cade—He is killed—Lambert Simnel is tutored to personate the Earl of Warwick—He is crowned at Dublin. He is taken Prisoner, pardoned, and made Scullion in the Royal Kitchen—Perkin Warbeck pretends to be the murdered Duke of York—He is countenanced by the King of France—He is acknowledged by the Duchess of Burgundy—Perkin lands in Scotland, and is aided by King James—He is married to Lady Catherine Gordon—He invades England, but fails—His Death—Pretenders in Portugal—Gabriel de Spinosa—He is hanged—The Son of a Tiler pretends to be Sebastian—He is sent to the Galleys—Gonçalo Alvarez succeeds him—He is executed—An Individual of talents assumes the Character of Sebastian—His extraordinary Behaviour in his Examinations—He is given up to the Spaniards—His Sufferings and dignified Deportment—His Fate not known—Pretenders in Russia—The first false Demetrius—He obtains the Throne, but is driven from it by Insurrection, and is slain—Other Impostors assume the same Name—Revolt of Pugatscheff—Pretenders in France—Hervegault and Bruneau assume the Character of the deceased Louis XVII.

The seductions presented by a throne, and some circumstances which seemed to give a chance of success, have, in various ages and countries, stimulated individuals to personate the descendants of sovereigns, and, in some instances, deceased sovereigns themselves. To mention all of them, even briefly, within the narrow limits of a chapter would be impossible; and, therefore, passing over the false Smerdis, the Alexanders, and others of ancient times, we will select a few specimens from modern history.

During the reigns of Henry the Sixth and Seventh, infinite carnage and misery were caused by the contest between the houses of York and Lancaster. That contest also gave rise to several remarkable impos-

tures on the part of the Yorkists. The Duke of York, in the time of Henry the Sixth, animated one Jack Cade, a native of Ireland, to personate Mortimer, and, in consequence of this, a formidable insurrection actually burst out in Kent during the Whitsuntide week. On the first mention of the popular name of Mortimer, the common people of that county, to the number of twenty thousand, flocked to Cade's standard. He marshalled the vast multitude that followed him, and marched to Blackheath, and, shortly after, to London. Having served in the French wars, he was enabled to encamp them with some military skill. He presented two petitions to the King, in the name of the people, and his demands, not in themselves unreasonable, were supported even by some of the King's friends. In spite of his attempts to maintain discipline, some of his followers pillaged a few houses in London, and thus alarmed the city, which at first had favoured him. The citizens consequently rose against him, and a sharp conflict ensued, which terminated to his disadvantage. A pardon being offered to his men, they accepted it, and immediately dispersed. He himself took horse, and fled towards Lewes, in Sussex; but he was overtaken, and discovered in a garden, by an esquire, named Alexander Iden, who slew him after a desperate combat.

The discontentment of the Yorkists against the House of Lancaster showed itself more remarkably during the reign of Henry the Seventh, whose increasing unpopularity, about the year 1486, induced the opposite party to attempt some singular impostures, and set up pretenders to the crown.

The first fictitious prince was introduced to the world, by one Richard Simon, a priest, possessed of

subtility and enterprise. The youth was in reality one Lambert Simnel, the son of a baker; endowed with understanding above his years, and address above his condition, he seemed well fitted to personate a prince of royal extraction.

A report had been spread, and received with great avidity, that Richard, Duke of York, second son to Edward the Fourth, had secretly escaped from confinement, saved himself from the cruelty of his uncle, and lay concealed somewhere in England. Taking advantage of that rumour, Simon had at first instructed his pupil to assume that name; but hearing afterwards that Edward Plantagenet, Earl of Warwick, was reported to have made his escape from the Tower, he changed the plan of his imposture, that Simnel might personate that unfortunate prince.

From his being better informed of circumstances relating to the royal family, particularly of the Earl of Warwick's adventures, than he could be supposed to have learned from one of Simon's condition, it was conjectured that persons of higher rank, partisans of the House of York, had laid the plan of the conspiracy, and had conveyed proper instructions to the actors.

The first scene opened in Ireland, a country zealously attached to the House of York. No sooner did Simnel present himself to Thomas Fitzgerald, Earl of Kildare, and claim his protection as the unfortunate Warwick, than the credulous nobleman, not suspecting so bold an imposture, paid him great attention, and consulted some persons of rank on a matter so extraordinary.

These parties were more sanguine in belief than even himself, and in proportion to the circulation of the story, it became the object of greater enthusiasm and credulity, till the people of Dublin, with one con-

sent, tendered their allegiance to Simnel as the true Plantagenet.

Simnel was lodged in the Castle of Dublin, and was crowned with a diadem taken from the statue of the Virgin, and publicly proclaimed king by the appellation of Edward the Sixth.

In order to prove the imposture of Simnel, Henry the Seventh ordered that Warwick should be taken from the Tower, led in procession through the streets of London, conducted to St. Paul's, and exposed to the view of the whole people. This expedient put a stop to the credulity of the English; but in Ireland the people still persisted in their revolt, and even retorted on the king the reproach of propagating an imposture, and of having shown to the populace a counterfeit Warwick.

Simnel landed in England and opposed the king in battle; but his faction having been routed, he was soon reduced to his original insignificance. He was pardoned by the king, was made a scullion in the royal kitchen, and was subsequently raised to the rank of a falconer.

Notwithstanding the failure of Lambert Simnel, a second attempt was, six years afterwards, made to disturb the government; it introduced one of the most mysterious personages recorded in English history.

The Duchess of Burgundy, it seems, full of resentment at Henry the Seventh, propagated a report that her nephew, Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, had escaped from the Tower. To personate the duke, a youth, named Perkin Warbeck, was discovered, fit for her purpose. He is asserted to have been the son of one Osbeck or Warbeck, a renegado Jew of Tournay. This Jew had been to London in the reign of Edward the Fourth, and during his stay his wife brought him a

son: being in favour at court, he prevailed with the king to stand godfather to his son, though it was hinted that there was, in reality, a much nearer connexion between the king and the youth; and by this, people accounted for the resemblance which was afterwards remarked between young Perkin and that monarch.

Having been well tutored by the Duchess of Burgundy, Perkin repaired to Ireland, which was chosen as the proper place for his first appearance. He landed at Cork, assuming the name of Richard, Duke of York, son of Edward the Fourth, and drew around him many partisans from among that credulous people. The news soon reached France; and Charles of France, then on the point of war with Henry, sent Perkin an invitation to repair to him, at Paris. On his arrival, he was received with all the marks of regard due to the Duke of York, as the rightful heir to the British throne. Perkin, both by his deportment and personal qualities, supported the opinion which was spread abroad of his royal pedigree; and the whole kingdom was full of the accomplishments, as well as the singular adventures, of the young Plantagenet.

Wonders of this nature are commonly augmented by distance. From France, the admiration and credulity diffused themselves into England. Sir George Neville, Sir George Taylor, and above one hundred gentlemen more, went to Paris in order to offer their services to the supposed Duke of York, and to share his fortunes. Alarmed by the pretender having gained so powerful a friend, Henry the Seventh signed a treaty of peace with Charles, who immediately ordered the adventurer to retire from his dominions. Perkin now solicited the protection of the Dowager Duchess of Burgundy. She gave him a warm reception, and

bestowed on him the appellation of the White Rose of England. This behaviour of hers induced numbers to give credence to his story, as it was thought impossible that the aunt could be mistaken as to the personal identity of her nephew.

In consequence of the great communication between the Low Countries and England, the English were every day more prepossessed in favour of the impostor. Disgusted with Henry's government, men of the highest birth and quality began to turn their eyes to the new claimant, and even opened a correspondence with him.

Sir Robert Clifford, with others, went over to Burgundy and tendered to Perkin their services. Clifford even wrote back to say that he knew perfectly the person of Richard, Duke of York, and that this young man was undoubtedly that prince himself. The whole nation was in suspense, and a regular conspiracy was formed against the king's authority.

Henry showed great ingenuity in detecting who this wonderful person was that thus boldly advanced pretensions to his crown. His spies insinuated themselves amongst the young man's friends, and bribed his retainers and domestic servants—nay, sometimes his confessor himself; and, in the end, the whole conspiracy was laid before him, and many of the chief conspirators were condemned and executed.

Perkin, however, continued at large, and made a descent on Kent, where he was repulsed. He then returned to Flanders, whence he sailed to Cork, but the Irish were no longer disposed to espouse his cause. In Scotland, however, to which he next proceeded, he was more fortunate. James, the monarch of that country, recognized him as "the true prince," and not only gave to him in marriage a near relation,

Lady Catherine Gordon, but also took up arms in his behalf. But, failing in two incursions into England, James grew tired of the contest, and consented to treat with Henry. Either fearing that he might be given up, or having received an intimation to withdraw, Perkin quitted Scotland with four ships and eighty followers, made a vain attempt at Cork to obtain aid from the Earl of Desmond, and finally landed in Cornwall, the men of which county had recently been in rebellion. Six thousand Cornishmen joined him, and at their head he assaulted Exeter, but was defeated by the citizens. Finding that Henry, with an overwhelming force, was now at hand, his courage failed him, and he took refuge in the sanctuary of Beaulieu, in Hampshire. He gave himself up on a promise of pardon, but was committed to the Tower. He was subsequently executed, on a charge of having, while imprisoned in the Tower, formed a treasonable plan with the Earl of Warwick to effect their escape, and raise the standard of insurrection.

Pretenders to royalty have not been of uncommon occurrence in other countries. In Portugal, the doubts respecting Sebastian having been really slain at the battle of Alcaçar, gave rise to several attempts to personate that chivalrous but rash monarch. Five or six impostors succeeded each other; of one claimant to the name and title of the Portuguese sovereign, however, the pretensions were so plausibly or so truly supported, that serious doubts have been entertained whether he was not "the true prince," and no "false thief."

Of the most conspicuous of these pretenders, the first is said to have been a pastry-cook of Madrigal, Gabriel de Spinosa by name. He was tutored to act his part by Father Michael de los Santos, an Augustin friar, who had been chaplain to Don Sebastian.

The friar had spoken so freely in Portugal against the Spanish usurpation, that Philip of Spain removed him out of the country, and made him confessor to a convent of nuns, at Madrigal. Donna Anna of Austria, Philip's niece, was one of the inmates of this convent. To this princess the friar introduced the pretended Sebastian, who played his assumed character so well that she gave him some rich jewels to raise money. While he was endeavouring to dispose of these valuables privately at Madrid, he was apprehended as a thief. He declared his real profession, and that the jewels belonged to Donna Anna, and he would perhaps have been released, had not his plot been betrayed by the intercepting of a letter, in which he was addressed with the title of majesty. The result was that he and the friar were hanged, and the princess was removed to another convent, and rigorously confined for the rest of her life.

The pertinacious belief of the Portuguese, that Sebastian would yet return, and their hatred of the Spanish domination, soon encouraged others to follow the example of Spinosa. The son of a tiler at Alcobaça, who, after leading a loose life, had turned hermit, next came forward to personate the much-desired monarch. He was accompanied by two companions, one of whom assumed the name of Don Christopher de Tavora, and the other took the title of the bishop of Guarda. They began to raise money, and to collect partisans round them. Their career was, however, cut short by the archduke, who caused them to be apprehended. The pseudo Sebastian was ignominiously paraded through the streets of Lisbon, and then sent to the galleys for life; the self-appointed bishop was sentenced to be hanged.

Undeterred by this failure, no long time elapsed

before another pretender started up, to supply the place of the tiler's son. This was Gonçalo Alvarez, the son of a mason. His first act of royal power was to give the title of Earl of Torres Novas to Pedro Alonso, a rich yeoman, whose daughter he intended to marry. He succeeded in raising a body of eight hundred men, and it was not until some blood had been shed that he could be put down. He was hanged and quartered at Lisbon, with his newly-created earl.

In spite of these examples, several new Sebastians arose. Only one of them, however, deserves mention; but this one, if an impostor, was at least an extraordinary character. It was at Venice that he made his first appearance, about twenty years after the battle of Alcaçar. Of the manner in which he escaped from the slaughter, and of all his subsequent wanderings, he gave a minute and seemingly well connected account. The Venetian senate, on complaint being made to it, ordered him to depart. He sought a refuge at Padua, but, being expelled from that city by the governor, he returned to Venice. The Spanish ambassador now called loudly for the arrest of the supposed Sebastian. He accused him not only of imposture, but also of many atrocious crimes. The wanderer was in consequence seized, and thrown into prison. The ordeal to which he was subjected was no slight one. He underwent twenty-eight examinations before a committee of nobles; and he is said to have fully cleared himself of all the crimes attributed to him, and even to have given so accurate a statement of the former transactions between himself and the republic as to excite the wonder of his hearers. His apparent firmness, piety, and patience, also gained him many friends.

The senate refused to examine the charge of im-

posture, unless some allied prince or state would request such an investigation. The request was made, and a solemn inquiry was instituted. No decision, however, followed; all that was done was to order the asserted Sebastian to quit the Venetian territories in three days. He bent his course to Florence, where he was arrested by order of the grand-duke, who delivered him up to the Count de Lemos, the viceroy of Naples. The count died some time after; and his successor appears to have forgotten the claimant to the Portuguese throne, who, for several years, suffered the severest hardships, as a prisoner in the castle Del Ovo. It is probable that attention was at length called to him by attempts to excite, at Lisbon, an insurrection in his behalf. Be this as it may, he was brought out of his dungeon, led disgracefully through the city, and proclaimed to be an impostor. On this occasion, he did not belie his pretensions, nor display any want of courage. Whenever the public officer exclaimed, "this is the man who calls himself Sebastian," he calmly said, "and Sebastian I am." When the same individual declared him to be a Calabrian, he exclaimed, "it is false." When the exposure of him was over, he was shipped as a galley-slave; he was next imprisoned at St. Lucar; and was subsequently removed to a castle in Castile. From that moment his fate is buried in oblivion.

In Russia, the seductive hope of ascending a throne has tempted various individuals to simulate deceased princes, and to stake life on "the hazard of the die," for the chance of obtaining their object. One only, with more ability and better fortune than the rest, succeeded in grasping for a short time the prize. On the death of Feodor, son of Ivan the Terrible, the throne was occupied by Boris Godunoff, who had

contrived to procure the murder of Demitri, or Demetrius, the younger brother of Feodor. For a while Boris governed wisely, and acquired much popularity with the multitude; but it was not long before the nobles began to plot against him; the affections of the populace were alienated, and universal confusion ensued. This state of affairs was favourable to imposture, and an individual soon appeared who had talents to turn it to his advantage. There was a monk named Otrefief, who bore an almost miraculous likeness to the murdered Demetrius. He was also possessed of qualities well calculated to win the suffrage of the crowd; for his figure was fine, his manners prepossessing, and his eloquence forcible.

Relying on his personal likeness to the deceased prince, the love which the people cherished for the old royal stock, and the hatred to which they had been roused against Boris, the hardy adventurer spread a report that he was Ivan, who had been saved from the assassins, by the substitution of another youth in his place. Leaving this to work on the minds of the Russians, he withdrew into Poland, where his arts, his eloquence, and his promises, soon gained for him numerous allies. Sendomir, a wealthy and powerful boyard, promised him his daughter in marriage whenever he should become czar; and, through the influence of Sendomir, the support of the king of Poland was obtained. Boris denounced him, in proclamations, as an impostor, and sent spies to seize and put him to death; but both were unavailing. The false Demetrius advanced into Russia, in 1604, at the head of a small army of Cossacks and Poles. Boris despatched a much larger force to meet him, and a desperate battle ensued. The spirit-stirring language of the pretender to his troops, and his own signal in-

trepidity, turned the scale of victory in his favour. Numbers immediately espoused his cause; Boris every day found his subjects and his troops deserting him; and at length he poisoned himself in despair. The victor entered Moscow, and was crowned there.

Demetrius began his reign in a manner which seemed to promise that it would be lasting. He was prudent, just, amiable, and accessible even to his poorest subjects. But the possession of power seems to have exercised on him its usual intoxicating influence. His virtues vanished, and he began to excite disgust. But the circumstances which most contributed to alienate from him the Russians were his impolitic lavishing of honours upon the Poles, and his equally impolitic contempt of the national religion. These were two inexpiable offences in the eyes of those whom he governed. A conspiracy was formed against him by Prince Schnisky, the palace of the pseudo Demetrius was stormed, and he perished by the weapons of the revolters.

Several other Demetriuses subsequently started up. The first of these was a Polish schoolmaster, who with the help of the Poles obtained possession of Moscow; but he soon sunk into obscurity. The rest were still less lucky; some of them perished on the gibbet. The last of the species appeared in 1616, and pretended to be the son of Demetrius. He was seized and strangled, and with him terminated all attempts to personate a prince of the race of Ivan the Terrible.

A century and a half elapsed before another adventurer of this kind was seen in Russia. His name was Pugatscheff, and he was a coarse and ferocious specimen of impostor princes. He was a Don Cossack, and had served against the Prussians and Turks. A trifling circumstance was the cause of his aspiring to

a throne. He was sent with a despatch to a general, whom he found surrounded by his staff officers. On seeing Pugatscheff, all the officers at once expressed their surprise at the striking likeness which he bore to the murdered Emperor Peter.

This was sufficient to awaken ambition in his mind. He deserted, and took refuge in Poland, where he spent some time in acquiring the information which was requisite for carrying his plan into effect. He then entered Russia, spread his forged tale among the Cossacks, and at length collected sufficient followers to enable him to take the field. He began his operations in 1773, by seizing some fortresses in the government of Orenbourg, swelled his numbers exceedingly, baffled the government forces, and, it is thought, might have made himself master of Moscow had he pushed boldly forward. Count Panin having brought together a considerable army, succeeded in driving him beyond the Ural mountains; but, in spite of every effort that was made against him, he contrived to keep up a harassing warfare for more than twelve months. It is probable that he might have held out longer had he not disgusted even his partisans by his acts of wanton and brutal cruelty. This, and the temptation offered by a reward of a hundred thousand roubles, induced some of his followers to betray him. He was carried to Moscow in an iron cage, and was executed there in January 1775.

France, within the last forty years, has had no less than three or four false dauphins; one of whom, of very recent date, was a German watchmaker. The most conspicuous of them were, however, Jean Marie Hervegault, and Maturin Bruneau. The former of these was the son of a tailor, at St. Lô. The strong resemblance of his features to those of Louis XVI.

was doubtless that which inspired him with the hope of passing for the son of that monarch. He had a good address, much art, and a large stock of impudence, and succeeded in making numerous proselytes, even among people of education and fortune. He was several times imprisoned, but his blind admirers still persisted in paying him royal honours. He died in the Bicêtre, in 1812. His successor, Maturin Bruneau, had neither equal skill nor equal success with Hervegault, yet he found a considerable number of credulous dupes. His career was stopped in 1818, by a sentence of seven years imprisonment, two years of which were imposed for his daring insolence to the court by which he was tried.

---

## CHAPTER VII.

### DISGUISES ASSUMED BY, OR IN BEHALF OF, ROYALTY.

Disguise of Achilles—Of Ulysses—Of Codrus—Fiction employed by Numa Pompilius—King Alfred disguised in the Swineherd's Cottage—His Visit, as a Harper, to the Danish Camp—Richard Cœur-de-Lion takes the Garb of a Pilgrim—He is discovered and imprisoned—Disguises and Escape of Mary, Queen of Scots—Escape of Charles the Second, after the Battle of Worcester—Of Stanislaus from Dantzic—Of Prince Charles Edward from Scotland—Peter the Great takes the Dress of a Ship Carpenter—His visit to England—Anecdote of his conduct to a Dutch Skipper—Stratagem of the Princess Ulrica of Prussia—Pleasant Deception practised by Catherine the Second of Russia—Joan of Arc—Her early Life—Discovers the King when first introduced at Court—She compels the English to raise the Siege of Orleans—Joan leads the King to be crowned at Rheims—She is taken Prisoner—Base and barbarous Conduct of her enemies—She is burned at Rouen—The Devil of Woodstock—Annoying Pranks played by it—Explanation of the Mystery—Fair Rosamond.

"UNEASY lies the head which wears a crown," are the emphatic words of Shakspeare; and that a penalty

of no light sorrow is often attached to the pomp and grandeur of royalty, is a fact which receives confirmation from the earliest traditionary accounts we have of the histories of kings and princes.*

To avoid the dangers inseparable from war; or during war, to overpower an enemy by guile, as well as by force of arms; or, in political troubles, to seek a temporary concealment; have been occasionally the objects of men celebrated in after-times as heroes, and as examples worthy and proper to be followed by such as aimed at future conquest or greatness.

Thetis, knowing that her son Achilles was doomed to perish, if he went to the Trojan war, privately sent him, it is said, to the court of Lycomedes, where he was disguised in a female dress; but, as Troy could not be taken without him, Ulysses went to the same court in the habit of a merchant, and exposed jewels and arms for sale. Achilles, neglecting the jewels, generally more attractive to female eyes, and displaying a certain skill in handling the weapons, inadvertently discovered his sex, and, challenged by Ulysses, was obliged to go to the war, in which he ultimately perished. The truth of this story cannot perhaps be safely asserted, especially as the introduction of the goddess Thetis is evidently poetical, but the tradition of it and the two following are quoted, to show that such impostures and concealments were not considered

* In Candide, or the Optimist, there is an admirable stroke of Voltaire's; eight travellers meet in an obscure inn, and some of them with not sufficient money to pay for a scurvy dinner. In the course of conversation they are discovered to be *eight monarchs* in Europe, who had been deprived of their crowns. What gave point to this satire was, that these eight monarchs were not the fictitious majesties of the poetic brain; imperial shadows, like those that appeared to Macbeth; but living monarchs, who were wandering at that moment about the world.

derogatory to the courage or good conduct of the greatest heroes of antiquity; and it is also probable that such facts, stripped of their poetical dress, did really take place.

Ulysses had pretended to be insane, that he might not be obliged to leave his beloved Penelope; and had yoked a horse and bull together, ploughing the sea-shore, where he sowed salt instead of corn. This dissimulation was discovered by Palamedes, who placed Telemachus, the infant son of Ulysses, before the plough, and thus convinced the world that the father was not mad; as he turned the plough from the furrow to avoid injuring his son.

Codrus, the last king of Athens, from a nobler motive concealed his dignity, and saved his country, by sacrificing his own life; for, when the Heraclidæ made war against Athens, the Delphian oracle was consulted about the event: the Pythoness declared, that the Peloponnesians would be victorious, provided they did not kill the Athenian king. This response being promulgated, Codrus, in the heroic spirit of the age, determined to sacrifice his own life for the benefit of his country. Disguising himself, therefore, as a peasant, he went to the outpost of the enemy, and seeking an occasion to quarrel, he was killed. When the real quality of the person slain became known, the Heraclidæ, believing their fate sealed if they remained, quickly retreated to their own country.

Numa Pompilius, at the death of Romulus, was unanimously elected king of Rome, and accepted the office after the repeated and earnest solicitations of the senate and people. Not, like Romulus, fond of war and military expeditions, he applied himself to tame the ferocity of his subjects, by inculcating a reverence for the deity. He had the discretion to see that, if

he could bring them to the belief that he was aided by higher powers, his own regulations would be better attended to. He, therefore, encouraged the report which was spread, of his paying regular visits to the goddess-nymph Egeria; and he made use of her name to give sanction to the laws and institutions which he had introduced, and he informed the Romans that the safety of the empire depended upon the preservation of the sacred ancyle, or shield, which it was generally believed had dropped from heaven.

King Alfred, during the unsettled times of the Saxon heptarchy, is an example of a reverse of fortune successfully overcome by temporary disguise and concealment. Striving with the Danes for the possession of his own country, he was worsted, and compelled to provide for his safety by flying to a small island in Somersetshire, in the midst of marshes. This little oasis in the desert afterwards obtained the name of Ethelingey, or Prince's Island. From a swineherd who resided there the king received shelter, and under his roof he remained for some months. It happened one day that the swain's wife placed some loaves on the hearth to be baked. The king was at the moment sitting by the fire, trimming his arrows. The woman, who was ignorant of his rank, said to him, "Turn thou those loaves, that they burn not; for I know that thou art a great eater." Alfred, whose thoughts and time were otherwise engaged, neglected this injunction, and the good woman, finding on her return the cakes all burnt, rated the king very severely; upbraiding him that, though he was so negligent in watching her warm cakes, he always seemed very well pleased to eat them. Alfred, it is said, subsequently munificently rewarded the peasant, whose name was Denulf, recommended him to apply

himself to letters, and afterwards made him Bishop of Winchester.

Some fugitives of Alfred's party, at length, coming to the same place, recognised him, and remained with him, forming the nucleus of his future army. After six months passed in this retreat, he sought to surprise the main army of the Northmen, which was still encamped in Wiltshire. But, before striking any blow, he resolved to inspect the camp of the enemy in person. His early predilection for Saxon poetry and music qualified him to assume another disguise, that of a harper, and in this character he went to the Danish camp. His harp and singing excited notice; he was admitted to the king's table, heard his conversation with his generals, and contemplated their position unsuspected. He then returned to his own troops in safety, and, taking advantage of his knowledge of the place, conducted them to the most unguarded quarter of the enemy's camp, who were soon put to flight with great slaughter. This success paved the way for his ultimately regaining his crown and kingdom. Such is the story which has been handed down to us by some writers; but it was unknown to Asser, the biographer and contemporary of Alfred, and its truth is more than doubtful.

Richard Cœur-de-Lion, at the close of those chivalrous adventures which made his name so renowned in the crusades, having left the Holy Land, on his way home, sailed to Corfu. On his arrival at that island, he hired three coasting vessels to carry him and his suite to Ragusa and Zara. Aware of the danger to which he was exposed from the animosity and machinations of his enemies, he concealed his dignity under the name of Hugh the Merchant. The beards and hair of Richard and his companions had

grown long from neglect, and they wore the garments of pilgrims. Driven by a storm on the Istrian coast, they landed between Venice and Aquileia, and proceeded toward Goritz, where it was necessary to solicit passports from the governor. He happened to be Maynard, the nephew of that Conrad who was stabbed in the streets of Tyre, and whose death was maliciously ascribed to Richard. Richard had purchased three rubies from a merchant at Pisa, and one of them was fixed in a gold ring. Consulting his native liberality, rather than remembering his assumed character, Richard sent this ring as a present to the governor, when he asked his protection. Startled at the value of the gift, Maynard asked who were the persons that wished for passports. He was answered that they were pilgrims from Jerusalem; but the man who sent the ring was Hugh the Merchant. "This is not the gift of a merchant, but of a prince," said he, still contemplating the ring: "this must be King Richard;" and he returned a courteous but evasive answer.

Richard felt that, in a country where he had so many bitter enemies, suspicion was equivalent to discovery, and that, if he remained, his safety was compromised. He quitted therefore his party, and by the assistance of a German youth, as his guide, travelled three days and nights without food. Pressed at last by hunger, he rested near Vienna, where his enemy the Duke of Austria then was. A second incautious liberality again excited suspicion; and he was obliged to remain in a cottage whilst the youth procured necessaries for him. Richard supplied his messenger with so much money, that the ostentatious display of it in the market by the youth excited curiosity. On his next visit to the market he was seized, and put to

the torture, by which he was compelled to reveal the name and the asylum of the king. The duke surrounded the cottage with his soldiers, who called on Richard to surrender, but the monarch refused to yield to any one but to the duke himself. A cruel imprisonment followed his arrest, but he was at last restored to his kingdom.

The romantic story of his favourite Blondel, seeking him throughout Europe in the disguise of a minstrel, and discovering his prison, by singing his favourite air under the walls of it, is believed to have no other foundation than the lay of some sentimental troubadour.

The beautiful and unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots excited a romantic interest and affection in her immediate followers, which has scarcely diminished at this distance of time; and in the attempt to escape from her evil fortune, in which she was strenuously aided by those followers, she was more than once obliged to assume a disguise to impose on the ever-wakeful vigilance of her enemies.

It is well known that this celebrated beauty, through the political, as well, as it is believed, the personal jealousy of Queen Elizabeth, was imprisoned in Loch-leven Castle, situated in the midst of a lake, which, being thus cut off from all communication with the surrounding country, was thought sufficiently secure, for the purposes of safe custody. But her beauty, and pitiable misfortunes, rendered her an object of compassion to many about her, and several attempts were made to rescue her from her rigorous confinement.

Mary had one day nearly succeeded in making her escape from the castle, disguised as a laundress. She had actually seated herself in the boat, when she was

betrayed by inadvertently raising to her cheek a hand of snowy whiteness; her beauty in this instance, as in many others, proving the greatest source of her misery.

William Douglas, soon after, had the address to steal the keys of the gates, from the hall in which Sir William Douglas his father, and his mother, were sitting at supper. The Queen, apprised of the circumstance, once more descended to the edge of the lake, where a boat was waiting, and having entered it, her maid assisted in rowing; as they approached the shore, William Douglas flung the keys into the lake. Having quitted the boat, the Queen mounted a palfrey, and rode to Middry, the residence of Lord Seaton, where she was surrounded by her friends. She did not, however, long enjoy this respite from her misfortunes, the defeat of her army, at the fatal battle of Langside, in 1568, consigning her to a long and barbarous imprisonment, and, ultimately, to the scaffold.

History records few princes who have been compelled to assume such a series of disguises, or met with such hair-breadth escapes, as fell to the lot of Charles the Second, after his overthrow at Worcester, which apparently crushed for ever the hopes of the royalist party. By the victors no means were left untried to seize upon his person, and had not the fidelity of his followers been even more than equal to the animosity of his enemies, he must undoubtedly have fallen a victim. A reward of a thousand pounds was offered for his apprehension, the formidable terrors of a traitor's death were fulminated against all who should dare to shelter him, the country was scoured in all directions by numerous parties, and the magistrates were enjoined to arrest every unknown individual, and to keep a vigilant eye on the sea-ports. All,

however, was to no purpose; his flight remained untraceable, his fate was involved in profound mystery, and it at length began to be supposed that he had perished obscurely by the hands of the peasantry. Forty-four days elapsed before the republicans received the unwelcome news that he not only still lived, but that he had eluded their pursuit, and gained a secure asylum in France.

On the night which followed the decisive defeat at Worcester, the Earl of Derby recommended Boscobel House to the prince, as a place of refuge, and at an early hour in the morning Charles reached White-ladies, twenty-five miles off. There the prince retired to assume his first disguise; his hair was closely cropped, his face and hands were discoloured, his clothes changed for those of a labourer, and a wood-bill was put into his hand, that he might personate a woodman. Under the escort of two peasants named Pendrel, he reached Madely, where he remained concealed till night, when he again sought his way to Boscobel. Here he found Colonel Careless, who was acquainted with every place of concealment in the country, and by his persuasions Charles consented to pass the day with him, amid the branches of a lofty oak, from which they occasionally saw the republican soldiers in search of them.

Night relieved them, and they returned to a concealment in the house. From thence Charles got to Mosely the following day on horseback, and there assumed the character of a servant; for the daughter of Colonel Lane, of Bentley, had a pass, to visit her aunt near Bristol, and Charles departed on horseback with his *mistress* behind him. On stopping for the night, he was indulged with a separate chamber under the pretence of indisposition, but he was recognised on the following morning by the butler, who, being

honoured with the royal confidence, endeavoured to repay it with his services. No ship being found at Bristol, it was resolved that Charles should remove to Trent, near Sherburn, and at Lyme a ship was hired to transport a nobleman and his *servant*, Lord Wilmot, and Charles, to the coast of France. But again disappointment attended them. They then rode to Bridport, and in the inn the ostler challenged Charles, as an old acquaintance whom he had known at Mr. Potter's of Exeter. The fact was, Charles had lodged there during the civil war. He had sufficient presence of mind to avail himself of this partial mistake, and said, "I once lived with Mr. Potter, but, as I have no time now, we will renew our acquaintance on my return to London, over a pot of beer."

A second ship was at length procured by Colonel Phillips at Southampton, but of this resource Charles was deprived by its being seized for the transport of troops to Jersey: a collier was, however, soon after found at Shoreham, and Charles hastened to Brighton, where he supped with the master of the vessel, who also recognised him, having known him when, as Prince of Wales, he commanded the royal fleet in 1648. The sailor, however, faithfully set him ashore, on the following evening, at Feecamp, in Normandy, where all his perils ended.

Equal dangers have been encountered by a few other princes, in flying from their foes. The escape of King Stanislas Leczinski, from Dantzic, in 1734, was accomplished under circumstances of extraordinary difficulty. The city was closely invested, all its immediate vicinity was inundated by the Vistula, and the whole of the surrounding country was in the hands of inveterate enemies, who were on the watch, and eager to seize him. The night before the fortress

capitulated, he quitted it, disguised, in a boat, accompanied by some peasants, and one of his generals. The night was spent in vain attempts to find the bed of the river, and the dawn compelled him to seek a precarious shelter in a hut within sight of the Russians. In the evening they departed, and at midnight the general and two peasants proceeded to search for a practicable route, leaving the king with only two peasants, of whose fidelity he was doubtful. The general did not return. Again Stanislas was obliged to take refuge in a hut, where he was every moment in dread of being discovered by the Cossacks. The Cossacks did, in reality, enter the house, but they left it without being aware that he was in it. At night, with his guides, he made a painful march, for some miles, through boggy ground, into which he often sunk knee deep. On reaching the Vistula, where he had expected to find a boat, it was gone, and he had to make his way back through the marsh. At the house where he now arrived, he was instantly recognised; but the owner was friendly, and promised to provide him with a boat. While the king was waiting, he was joined by one of the peasants who had accompanied the general, who informed him that the Cossacks were searching for him in every part of the neighbourhood. The boat was at length procured, and the king set out to embark; but his guides were so much frightened by seeing the fires of the enemy's flying camps on all sides, that they refused to proceed. It was only by a great exertion of firmness on his part that they were prevailed on to move forward. At length they reached the boat. The king wished to force on the finder of it a handful of gold, but the noble-spirited peasant could hardly be prevailed on to accept even a couple of ducats. Landing at a village

to hire or purchase a vehicle, Stanislas was in the utmost danger of being discovered, in consequence of the drunkenness of his guides. He succeeded, however, in reaching the Nogat, on the other side of which he would be in safety. But here again his hopes were on the point of being wrecked by the stupid obstinacy of his companions, who insisted on his going round by Marienburgh, to cross the bridge there; a measure which would have been fatal. Stanislas peremptorily refused to consent to this mad scheme; and he was lucky enough to procure a boat, by means of which he was conveyed to the Prussian territory, where he met with a hospitable reception.

More protracted sufferings were experienced by the Pretender, Prince Charles Edward, after the battle of Culloden. Pursued by numerous foes, some of whom were rendered inveterate by their political feelings, while others were stimulated by the enormous reward of thirty thousand pounds which was offered for his apprehension, he was, for six months, in hourly expectation of falling into their hands. He was hunted by land and water, from island to island, from cave to cave, and from the abode of one partisan to that of another, with a perseverance which nothing but his own presence of mind, and the fidelity of his followers, could have rendered ineffectual. During the hot chase to which he was exposed, he was subjected to privations of the severest kind; hunger, thirst, exposure to the elements, and incessant fatigue. Among his many disguises was the dress of a female. It seems that he now and then forgot the demeanour which belonged to his garb. On one occasion, in crossing a stream, he held up his petticoats so indelicately high, that his conductor expressed fear that suspicion would be excited; upon which the prince

went to the opposite extreme, and allowed his clothes to float on the water, till he was reminded that this also might draw attention to him. The battle of Culloden was fought on the sixteenth of April, and it was not till the nineteenth of September that Charles Edward was at last rescued from the perils which environed him, by the arrival of two French vessels, in one of which he embarked for France. Even in the last scene of his adventures danger threatened him; for the British fleet was then cruising off the French coast, and he actually sailed through it in his way to Morlaix, but was hidden from it by a thick fog.

One of the most meritorious disguises ever put on by a monarch, as it had its origin solely in good intentions and anxiety for the welfare of his subjects, is described in the history of Peter the Great, czar of Muscovy; who, though his education was defective, was endowed with a strong mind, and felt how much was still to be acquired before he could realize the vast projects which he was eager to execute. To counteract the formidable power of the Strelitzes, who were far more inclined to dispute than obey the commands of their superiors, he resolved to introduce a new discipline, and to re-organise his army; and, in order to set the example of subordination, he himself entered as a private in one of his corps, which was disciplined in the German manner. In this corps he gradually rose to command by his services, and by sharing the toils and privations of the military life.

In 1695, he laid siege to Azoff; but the enterprise failed from a want of shipping to block the harbour: this circumstance, among others, forced on his attention the necessity of improving his navy. His fondness, however, for naval architecture is dated from 1691, when accidentally taking notice of a decayed

sloop near Moscow, and being told that it was of foreign construction, and able to sail to windward, he caused it to be repaired by a Dutch shipwright, and was highly delighted to observe its manœuvres, which he afterwards learned to regulate himself. Perhaps the most interesting and extraordinary circumstance in the history of mankind, is, that the despotic monarch of a mighty dominion should descend from his throne, and travel as a private person, in the train of his own ambassador sent to Holland. When Peter arrived there, he first took up his abode in the Admiralty at Amsterdam, and afterwards enrolled himself among the ship-carpenters, and went to the village of Sardam, where he wrought as a common carpenter and blacksmith, with unusual assiduity, under the name of Master Peter. He was clad and fed as his fellow-workmen, for he would not allow of vain distinctions.

The next year he passed over to England, where, in four months, he completed his knowledge of ship building. After receiving every mark of respect from William the Third, he left this country accompanied by several English ship-builders and carpenters, whom he employed with great liberality, in his naval dock-yards, and he is said to have subsequently written several pieces on naval affairs.

John Evelyn, the author of the Sylva, gives rather a curious account of the emperor in his Diary: he writes, "1698, January. The czar of Muscovy being come to England, and having a mind to see the building of ships, hired my house at Say's Court, and made it his court and palace, new furnished for him by the King."

Whilst the czar was in his house, Mr. Evelyn's servant thus wrote to him: "There is a house full of people, and right nasty. The czar lies next your

library, and dines in the parlour next your study. He dines at ten o'clock and six at night, is very seldom at home a whole day, very often in the king's yard, or by water dressed in several dresses. The king is expected here this day; the best parlour is pretty clean for him to be entertained in. The king pays for all he has."

Such a noble mind, employed in the acquisition of knowledge, for the benefit of his country and his people, may well be pardoned for any deficiencies in the accomplishments or embellishments of life.

In Carr's Tour round the Baltic is related an anecdote of the czar's partiality towards those connected with maritime affairs. A Dutch skipper hearing that Petersburg was building, and that the emperor had a great passion for ships and commerce, resolved to try his fortune there, and accordingly arrived with the first merchant vessel that ever sailed on the Neva, and was the bearer of a letter of introduction to the captain of the port from a friend of his in Holland, requesting him to use his interest to procure a freight for him. Peter the Great was working like a common labourer in the Admiralty as the galliot passed, and saluted with two or three small guns. The emperor was uncommonly delighted, and having been informed of the Dutchman's business, he resolved to have some frolic with him, and accordingly commanded the port captain to see the skipper as soon as he landed, and direct him to the emperor, as a merchant just settled there, which character he intended to personate. Peter repaired to his original cottage on the Neva, with his empress, who to humour the plan, dressed herself in a plain bourgeoise habit, such as suited the wife of a merchant. The Dutchman was introduced to the emperor, who received him with great kind-

ness, and they sat and ate bread and cheese, and smoked together for some time, during which the Dutchman's eye examined the room, and began to think that one who lived in so mean a place could be of no service to him: presently the empress entered, when the skipper addressed her, by observing that he had brought her a cheese, a much better one than she had ever tasted, for which, affecting an awkward manner, she thanked him. Being much pleased with her appearance, he took from his coat a piece of linen, and begged her acceptance of it for shifts. "Oh," exclaimed the emperor, taking the pipe from his mouth, "Kate, you will now be as fine and proud as an empress." This was followed by the stranger begging to have a kiss, which she coyly indulged him in. At this moment Prince Menzikof, the favourite and minister of Peter the Great, covered with all his orders, stood before the emperor uncovered. The skipper began to stare with amazement, whilst Peter, making private signs, induced the prince to retire. The astonished Dutchman said, "Why, you appear to have great acquaintance here." "Yes," replied Peter, "and so may you, if you stay here but ten days; there are plenty of such needy noblemen as the one you saw; they are always in debt and very glad to borrow money; but beware of these fellows, and do not be dazzled by their stars and garters, and such trumpery." This advice put the Dutchman more at his ease, who smoked and drank very cheerfully, and had made his bargain with the imperial merchant for a cargo, when the officer of the guard entered to receive orders, and stood with profound respect, addressing Peter by the title of Imperial Majesty. The Dutchman sprang from his chair, and fell on his knees, imploring forgiveness for the liberties he had been taking. Peter,

laughing heartily, raised him up and made him kiss the empress's hand, presented him with fifteen hundred rubles, gave him a freight, and ordered that his vessel, as long as her timbers remained together, should be permitted to enter all the Russian ports free of duty. This privilege made the rapid fortune of the owner.

The marriage of Ulrica, sister of Frederick the Great, with Adolphus Frederick of Sweden, was the fruit of a stratagem, rather unfairly played off on her sister. The court and senate of Sweden sent an ambassador *incognito* to Berlin, to watch and report upon the characters and dispositions of Frederick's two unmarried sisters, Ulrica and Amelia; the former of whom had the reputation of being very haughty, crafty, satirical, and capricious; and the Swedish court had already nearly determined in favour of Amelia, who was remarkable for the attraction of her person and sweetness of her mind. The mission of the ambassador was soon buzzed abroad, and Amelia was overwhelmed with misery, on account of her insuperable objection to renounce the tenets of Calvin for those of Luther. In this state of wretchedness she implored the assistance of her sister's counsels, to prevent an union so repugnant to her happiness. The wary Ulrica advised her to assume the most insolent and repulsive deportment to every one, in the presence of the Swedish ambassador, which advice she followed, whilst Ulrica put on all those amiable qualities which her sister had provisionally laid aside; every one, ignorant of the cause, was astonished at the change; and the ambassador informed his court that fame had completely reversed their reciprocal good and bad qualities. Ulrica was consequently preferred, and mounted the throne of Sweden.

At the village of Zarsko-Zelo, at which is situated the most magnificent of the imperial country palaces in Russia, there were no inns, but the hospitality of Mr. Bush, the English gardener, prevented that inconvenience from being felt by visitors properly introduced to him. When Joseph II., Emperor of Germany, to whom every appearance of show was disgusting, expressed his intention of visiting Catherine II., she offered him apartments in her palace, which he declined. Her Majesty, well knowing his dislike to parade, had Mr. Bush's house fitted up as an inn, with the sign of a Catherine-wheel, below which appeared in German characters "The Falkenstein Arms;" Falkenstein being the name which the emperor assumed. His Majesty knew nothing of the ingenious and attentive deception, till after he had quitted Russia. When the emperor once went to Moscow, he is said to have preceded the royal carriages as an avant-courreur, in order to avoid the obnoxious pomp and ceremony which an acknowledgment of his rank would have awakened.

About the year 1428, there arose in France, in the person of Joan of Arc, commonly called the Maid of Orleans, a heroine, who by her enthusiasm stimulated the French to resist the domination of the English. She appears to have been simple, chaste, modest, and inoffensive. During her youth, she was frequently seen kneeling devoutly in a corner of her village church: piety, indeed, seems to have produced its elevating effects on her mind, and to it may be ascribed the largest portion of her success. There was, in truth, nothing about her brief but brilliant day of public action which looked like wilful imposture in herself. We must therefore suppose she was practised upon by others, or that her young and enthusi-

astic imagination, by being continually worked upon, became afflicted with a permanent, though partial, derangement; a species of madness which is not uncommon. The latter supposition is supported by her own language; she declared that, at the age of thirteen, she had been instructed, by a voice from God, how to govern herself, and that she saw St. Michael several times, who ordered her to be a good girl; and that God would assist her, and that she must go to the succour of the king of France.

Before she became a public character, she used to amuse herself with her companions in running, and fighting with a kind of lance, and also on horseback; which accounted for her subsequent excellent management of weapons, and skill in riding.

There was a popular tradition, that France was to be delivered by a virgin from the borders of Lorraine. This might have suggested or assisted her pretensions; and, having once fixed popular attention, and excited popular interest, public feeling both supported and carried her to the completion of her wishes.

Joan, when first presented at court, is said to have known the king, who was standing promiscuously among the nobles, and to have revealed to him a secret unknown to any one else. It has been very much canvassed what this secret could be; but, it seems the Chevalier de Boissy, who was a favourite of Charles the Seventh during their youth, and was at that time his bedfellow, was in possession of it. Charles told him that he had one day prayed, without utterance, that Heaven would defend his right; Joan reminded him of this prayer. Such an incident leads to a suspicion that some persons near the king, and acquainted with his private thoughts, were secretly instructing the Maid of Orleans, and practising, by

these means, on the eredulity of the nation. But of still more consequenee did her assumptions prove to the English, who, under the administration of the Duke of Bedford, were masters at that time of the eapital and almost all the northern provinees of France. During her interview with the French king, Joan, in the name of the Supreme Being, offered to raise the siege of Orleans, and to eonduet him to Rheims, to be there crowned and anointed ; and she demanded, as the instrnment of her future vietories, a particular sword, which was kept in the ehurch of St. Catherine of Fierbois, and which, though she had never seen it, she described by all its marks, and by the place in which it had long lain neglected.

An assembly of grave doctors and theologians eautiously examined Joan's mission, and pronouneed it undoubtedly supernatural. She was sent to the parliament and interrogated before that assembly ; and the presidents and counsellors, who had eome persuaded of her imposture, went away eonvineed of her inspiration. All the English affeeted to speak with derision of the maid, and of her heavenly eommission ; and said that the Freneh king was now redueed to a sorry pass, when he had reeourse to such ridiculous expedients ; but they felt their imagination secretly struck with the vehement persuasion which prevailed in all around them ; and waited with anxious expeetation for the issue of these extraordinary preparations.

The inhabitants of Orleans now believed themselves invineible under her influenee, and the Count of Dunois himself, perceiving such an alteration both in friends and foes, eonsented that the next eonvoy, which was to march in a few days, should enter by the side of Beausse, where the English were most numerous.

The convoy approached; no sign of resistance appeared in the besiegers; it passed without interruption between the redoubts of the English, and a dead silence and astonishment reigned among those troops which were formerly so elated with victory. The siege of Orleans was speedily raised, the English army being unable to continue its operations.

The raising of the siege was one part of the maid's promise to Charles; the crowning him at Rheims was the other; and she now vehemently insisted that he should set out on that enterprise. Rheims lay in a distant quarter of the kingdom, and was then in the hands of a victorious enemy; the whole road which led to it was also occupied by their garrisons; and no man could be so sanguine as to imagine that such an attempt could so soon come within the bounds of possibility. Charles, however, resolved to follow the exhortations of his warlike prophetess, and to lead his army upon this promising adventure. He set out for Rheims at the head of twelve thousand men. Troyes opened its gates to him, Chalons imitated the example, Rheims sent him a deputation with its keys, and he scarcely perceived, as he passed along, that he was marching through an enemy's country. The ceremony was performed with the holy oil, which a pigeon had brought to King Clovis from heaven on the first establishment of the French monarchy. The maid of Orleans stood by his side in complete armour, displaying the sacred banner. The people shouted with the most unfeigned joy, on viewing such a complication of wonders. The inclinations of men swaying their belief, no one doubted of the inspirations and prophetic spirit of the maid; the real and undoubted facts brought credit to every exaggeration; for no fiction could be more wonderful than the events which were known to be true.

The maid was soon after taken prisoner by the Burgundians, while she was heading a sally upon the quarters of John of Luxembourg. The service of *Te Deum* was publicly celebrated, on this fortunate event, at Paris. The Duke of Bedford fancied that, by her captivity, he should again recover his former ascendancy over France; and, to make the most of the present advantage, he purchased the captive from John of Luxembourg, and instituted a prosecution against her. The Bishop of Beauvais, a man wholly devoted to the English interests, presented a petition against Joan, and desired to have her tried by an ecclesiastical court, for sorcery, impiety, idolatry, and magic. The university of Paris was so mean as to join in the same request. In the issue, she was condemned for all the crimes of which she had been accused, aggravated by heresy; her revelations were declared to be inventions of the devil to delude the people; and she was sentenced to be delivered over to the secular arm. Her spirit gave way to the terrors of that punishment to which she was sentenced, and she publicly declared herself ready to recant; she acknowledged the illusion of those revelations which the church had rejected, and promised never more to maintain them. Her sentence was then mitigated: she was condemned to perpetual imprisonment, and to be fed during life on bread and water.

But the barbarous vengeance of Joan's enemies was not satisfied with this victory. Suspecting that the female dress which she now consented to wear was disagreeable to her, they purposely placed in her apartment a suit of men's apparel, and watched for the effects of that temptation upon her. On the sight of a dress in which she had acquired so much renown, and which she once believed she wore by the particular appoint-

ment of Heaven, all her former ideas and passions revived, and she ventured in her solitude to clothe herself again in the forbidden garments. Her insidious enemies caught her in that situation; her fault was interpreted to be no less than a relapse into heresy. No recantation would now suffice; no pardon could be granted her; she was condemned to be burnt in the market-place of Rouen; and the infamous sentence was accordingly executed.

During the time of the commonwealth, commissioners, appointed by Oliver Cromwell, were sent to Woodstock for the purpose of surveying the royal demesne; but they speedily found themselves obliged to quit it, in consequence of the great alarm occasioned them by circumstances which could only happen, as they supposed, through the agency of means which were considered in those days to be quite supernatural; though the knowledge of later times creates a surprise at the credulity of the commissioners being so easily worked upon by tricks which would now be regarded as almost beneath the capacity of a schoolboy. The Woodstock devil is the name by which the supposed spirit is known.

The strange events which are the subject of this article, happened in the months of October and November, 1649. The commissioners arrived on October the 13th, taking up their residence in the king's own apartments, turning his dining-room into their wood-yard, and supplying themselves with fuel from a famous oak, called the Royal Oak *, that nothing might be left with the name of king about it.

The first supernatural appearance that disturbed the equanimity of these worthy commissioners was

* This was not the tree which gave the name to "Royal Oak Day."

that of a large black dog, which entering one of the rooms overturned two or three chairs, and then disappeared under a bed. The next day noises were heard overhead, as of persons walking, though they knew that all the doors were locked. The wood of the king's oak was brought by parcels from the dining-room, and thrown with great violence into the presence-chamber. Giles Sharpe, their secretary, was active in attempting to discover the causes of these disturbances, but his inquiries were unsuccessful. On unlocking the door of the room, in the presence of the commissioners, the wood was found all thrown about in different directions. The chairs were tossed about, the papers torn, and the ink spilt; which mischief, it was argued, could only have been perpetrated by one who must have entered through the key-hole.

At night the beds of Giles Sharpe and two other servants were lifted up, and let down violently, so as to throw them out; again, on the nineteenth, when in bed, the candles were blown out, with a sulphureous smell, and the trenchers of wood hurled about the room.

On the twentieth, the commissioners themselves, when in bed, were attacked with cruel blows, and the curtains drawn to and fro with great violence. This sort of attack upon the peace and safety of the commissioners was repeated almost every night. They were also assaulted from without, for a vast number of stones and horses' bones were thrown through the windows, to the great risk of those within.

A servant, who was rash enough to draw his sword, perceived that an invisible hand had hold of it too, which, pulling it from him, struck him a violent blow on the head with the pommel of it. Dr. Plot concludes his relation of this affair with observing, that "many

of the circumstances related are not reconcilable to juggling," and he adds, "all which being put together, perhaps may easily persuade some man, otherwise inclined, to believe that immaterial beings might be concerned in this business, provided the speculative theist be not, after all, a practical atheist."

"The Secret History of the good Devil of Woodstock," a pamphlet published not long after these events, unravelled these mysteries. It appears that one Joe Collins, commonly called "Funny Joe," was that very devil. He hired himself as a servant to the commissioners, under the name of Giles Sharpe, and, by the help of two friends, an unknown trap-door in the ceiling of the bedchamber, and a pound of gunpowder, played all these amazing tricks.

The sudden extinguishing of the candles was contrived by inserting gunpowder into the lower part of each candle, destined to explode at a certain time. The great dog was no other than a bitch, that had whelped in that room shortly before, and which made all that disturbance in seeking her puppies, and which, when she had served his purpose, Giles Sharpe let out, and then pretended to search for.

The circumstance that had most effect in driving the commissioners from Woodstock was this:—they had formed a reserve of a part of the premises to themselves, and having entered into a private agreement among themselves, they hid the writing in the earth, under the roots of an orange-tree, which grew in a tub in the corner of the room. In the midst of dinner one day this earth took fire, and burned violently with a blue flame, filling the room with a strong sulphureous stench; the explanation of which phenomenon may be found in modern books of experimental chemistry, under the head of "receipt to

make an earthquake." This last attaek so eompletely terrified the eommissioners, that, fearing the very devils from hell were rising against them, they speedily took to flight.

So early as the reign of Henry the Seeond, Woodstock was famed for being the residence of the beautiful Rosamond, and it is thus quaintly deseribed by Speed. "Henry the Second built an intrieate labyrinth at Woodstoek, and therein he stowed this pearl of his esteem (Rosamond), unto whose closet, for the inexplieate windings, none eould approach but the king, and those instrueted by him. Notwithstanding, his jealous Queen, Eleanor, favoured by aeeident, thus diseovered the privacy of the favourite, for a clewe of silk having fallen from Rosamond's lap, as she sat to take the air, and was suddenly fleeing from the sight of the seareher, the end of silk fastened to her foot; the elewe, still unwinding, remained behind, whieh the queen followed up till she had found what she sought, and upon Rosamond so bestowed her spleen, that the gentle ladye lived not long after."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### MILITARY STRATAGEMS.

Characteristic Mark of a skilful General—Importance anciently attached to Military Stratagems—The Stratagem of Joshua at Ai, the first which is recorded—Stratagem of Julius Cæsar in Gaul—Favourable Omen derived from Sneezing—Artifice of Bias at Priene—Telegraphic Communication—Mode adopted by Hystiæus to convey intelligence—Relief of Casilinum by Gracchus—Stratagem of the Chevalier de Luxembourg to convey Ammunition into Lisle—Importance of concealing the Death of a General—The manner in which the Death of Sultan Solyman was kept secret—Stratagem of John Visconti—Stratagem of Lord Norwich at Angoulême—Capture of Amiens by the Spaniards—Manner in which the Natives of Sonia threw off the Yoke.

The part of a skilful general does not only consist in the capability of gaining a great battle, but also in knowing when to avoid the risk of an engagement. So numerous and so variable are the chances of war, that a commander of even the best-appointed army should be prepared to meet all emergencies, in the event of its strength being destroyed, or its numbers diminished, by famine, fatigue, or desertion; so that, notwithstanding these adverse circumstances, he may still have a chance of overcoming by policy those enemies whom he had hoped to subdue by the sword.

Discretion is always the better part of valour, and, in some cases, a handful of men may decide the event of a campaign, in which, otherwise, the blood of thousands might be spilt in vain. The old writers on the art of war did not fail to attach great importance to those *stratagems*, by which much was effected, or attempted, when one side was reduced to the necessity of maintaining a defensive system of warfare.

The earliest account of recourse being had to mili-

tary stratagem is that recorded in the eighth chapter of Joshua, where that leader of the Israelites, besieging the city of Ai, said, "Behold, ye shall lie in wait against the city, even behind the city: go not very far from the city, but be ye all ready: and I, and all the people that are with me, will approach unto the city: and it shall come to pass, when they come out against us, as at the first, that we will flee before them. For they will come out after us, till we have drawn them from the city; then ye shall rise up from the ambush, and seize upon the city: for the Lord your God will deliver it into your hand."

Thus fell the city of Ai into the hands of Joshua, and a similar kind of stratagem has since frequently turned the day between contending armies. Julius Cæsar did not consider it beneath a general or warrior to have recourse to almost a similar stratagem, when part of the army under Q. Cicero, in Gaul, was besieged. By the apparent flight of his troops, Julius Cæsar drew the enemy into a convenient spot for an engagement, and, turning, overcame them.

A circumstance most trifling in itself, when it has been ushered in by superstition, as a good omen, has often raised the spirits of an army. Xenophon relates in the Anabasis, that when the Greeks in some alarm were consulting, previous to the celebrated retreat of the ten thousand out of Asia, an accident, which in itself was even ridiculous, did nevertheless, through the importance attributed to it by the Grecian superstition, assist not a little to infuse encouragement. Xenophon was speaking of that favour from the gods which a righteous cause entitled them to hope for, against a perjured enemy, when somebody sneezed; immediately, the general voice addressed ejaculations to protecting Jupiter, whose omen it was supposed to

be, a sacrifice to the god was proposed, a universal shout declared approbation, and the whole army in chorus sang the pæan.

Bias, by the following artifice, induced Alyattes, king of Lydia, to raise the siege of Priene, where he was born. That city was pressed by famine, which circumstance being suspected by the besiegers gave them great hopes; Bias, however, caused two mules to be fattened, and contrived a way to have them pass into the enemy's camp. The good condition they were in astonished the king, who thereupon sent deputies into the city, under pretence of offering peace, but really to observe the state of the town and people. Bias, guessing their errand, had ordered the granaries to be filled with heaps of sand, and those heaps to be covered with corn. When the deputies returned, and made their report to the king, of the great plenty of provisions they had seen in the city, he hesitated no longer, but concluded a treaty and raised the siege.

The invention of telegraphic communication has proved of the greatest utility in modern warfare, both for despatch and security. In ancient times, the bearer of messages had both an important and dangerous duty to perform, and one which was very uncertain in its execution. A singular and ingenious method of communication is attributed to Hystiæus, who, desiring to write to Aristagoras, shaved the head of his trustiest servant, and wrote upon his scalp, in certain brief characters, what he would impart to his friend, and keeping him in his house till the hair was grown as thick as before, then sent him on his errand *.

* The hair has often been found very useful as a means of concealment for other purposes. The Indian lavadores, whilst washing

By the policy of Gracchus, the Roman general, the Campanian city of Casilinum was for a considerable time prevented from falling into the hands of Annibal. Gracchus was encamped in the vicinity of the city, but, though the garrison was reduced to the most dreadful extremity by famine, many of the soldiers having been driven to commit suicide, he did not dare to make a movement to relieve the besieged, the dictator having imperatively enjoined him not to stir from his position. In this emergency he had recourse to stratagem.

The Vulturnus ran through the place, and Gracchus resolved to make it the channel by which to convey succours. "He therefore," says Livy, "collected corn from all parts of the country round, and having filled therewith a great number of casks, sent a messenger to Casilinum to the magistrate, desiring that the people should catch the casks which the river would bring down. The following night was passed in attentively watching for the completion of the hopes raised by the Roman messenger, when the casks, being sent along the middle of the stream, floated down to the town. The same stratagem was practised with success on the following night and on the third; but the river being afterwards rendered more rapid by the continued rains, an eddy drove them across to the side where the enemy's guards were posted, and they were discovered sticking among osiers which grew on the banks. This being re-

---

the sand for the grains of gold, were observed by the overseers to be continually scratching their heads, or passing their fingers through their thick woolly hair. A suspicion arising, the hair was combed, and was found full of the gold grains. On keeping their hair quite short, it was discovered that the necessity for such frequent application to the head had ceased.

ported to Annibal, care was taken for the future to guard the Vulturnus with greater vigilance, so that no supply sent down by it to the city should pass without discovery. Notwithstanding which, quantities of nuts being poured into the river at the Roman camp, and floating down to Casilinum, were stopped there with hurdles. The scarcity, however, at last became so excessive, that, tearing off the straps and leathern coverings of their shields, and softening them in boiling water, they endeavoured to chew them; nor did they abstain from mice or any other kind of animal. They even dug up every sort of herb and root that grew at the foot of the ramparts of the town; and when the enemy had ploughed up all the ground round the wall, that produced any herbs, they sowed it with turnip seed, which made Annibal exclaim, 'Am I to sit here before Casilinum until these grow?' Although he had hitherto refused to listen to any terms of capitulation, yet he now allowed overtures to be made to him, respecting the redeeming of the men of free condition. An agreement was made, that for each of these a ransom should be paid of seven ounces of gold; and then the garrison surrendered.

A still more daring, and almost equally successful stratagem was employed, early in the eighteenth century, to protract the defence of Lisle, which was then besieged by the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene. Ammunition beginning to be scarce in the city, the Chevalier de Luxembourg formed a plan for introducing into the fortress a supply, not only of powder, but also of men and arms. Having succeeded in keeping his project a secret from the enemy, the chevalier began his march at the head of two thousand five hundred selected cavalry; a part of whom

were carbineers and dragoons. Each horseman carried behind him a sack, containing sixty pounds of powder; and each dragoon and carbineer had three muskets, and a large quantity of gun-flints. Between nine and ten in the evening, the band reached the barrier of the lines of circumvallation. In front of the detachment was an officer who could speak Dutch well, and knew all the Dutch regiments which were employed in patrolling. On being challenged by the guard, he unhesitatingly replied, "Open the gate quickly; I am bringing powder to the besiegers, and am pursued by a French detachment." The barrier was promptly opened. Nineteen hundred of the party had passed through, when a French officer, seeing that his men were straggling, imprudently exclaimed, in his native language, "Close up! close up!" This gave the alarm to the allied officers, and a fire was opened upon the French. The powder of some of the horsemen exploded, and sixty of them were immediately blown to pieces. The rear of the party now took flight towards Douay; but of those who had been fortunate enough to pass the barrier, eighteen hundred reached Lisle, to which they brought a supply of twelve hundred muskets and eighty thousand pounds of powder.

The well-being of an army, and the spirits of the troops during an engagement, depend so much on the safety of their favourite general, that any sudden rumour of his being slain would in all probability entirely change the fortune of the day. In the event of such a catastrophe his death has been often studiously concealed from the main body of the troops, till it was no longer necessary or possible to withhold such intelligence. The following instance, related by

Ward, in his Art of War, is perhaps the most remarkable, if correctly given, for the length of time this secret was preserved.

Solyman, the Ottoman emperor, dying at the siege of Sigeth, in Hungary, his death was cunningly concealed by Mahomet Bassa twenty days before the Janizaries knew of it; and when any of them inquired for him he would show them the emperor sitting in his horse litter, as if troubled with the gout; but the soldiers, suspecting something, began to be mutinous, whereupon he promised that they should see the emperor the next day, for which purpose he apparelled the corpse in the large royal robes, and placed him in a chair at the end of a long gallery; a little boy was placed behind, to move the emperor's hand, and to stroke his beard, as it seems his manner was. Which sign of life and strength the soldiers perceiving were well contented, so that his death was concealed for forty days more till the siege was ended.

John Visconti, Archbishop, as well as Governor of Milan, in the fourteenth century, was a very ambitious character, and excited the jealousy of the pope by his show of temporal authority, and by his aiming at becoming master of all Italy. The pope, who resided at that time at Avignon, sent a nuncio to John Visconti, to demand the city of Bologna, which he had purchased, and to choose whether he would possess the spiritual or temporal power, for both could not be united. The archbishop, after hearing the message with respect, said he would answer it the following Sunday at the cathedral. The day came, and, after celebrating mass in his pontifical robes, he advanced towards the legate, requiring him to repeat the orders of the pope, on the choice of the spiritual or the tem-

poral: then taking a cross in one hand, and drawing forth a naked sword with the other, he said, "Behold my spiritual and my temporal, and tell the holy father from me, that with the one I will defend the other." The pope, not content with this answer, commenced a process, and summoned him to appear in person, on pain of excommunication. The archbishop received the brief, and promised to obey it; he sent immediately to Avignon one of his secretaries, ordering him to retain for his use all the houses and stables he could hire in Avignon, with provisions for the subsistence of twelve thousand horse, and six thousand foot. The secretary executed his commission so well that the strangers, who came on business, could find no place to lodge in. The pope, being informed of this, asked the secretary if the archbishop required so many houses. The latter answered, that he feared those would not be sufficient, because his master was coming with eighteen thousand troops, besides a great number of the inhabitants of Milan, who would accompany him. Terrified at this account, the pope paid immediately the expense the secretary had been at, and dismissed him, with orders to tell the archbishop, that he dispensed with his making a journey to Avignon.

In the wars between Edward the Third and Philip of France, Angoulême was besieged by the Duke of Normandy. After a brave and vigorous defence, the governor, Lord Norwich, found himself reduced to such extremities, as obliged him to employ a stratagem, in order to save his garrison, and prevent his being reduced to surrender at discretion. He appeared on the walls, and desired a parley with the Duke of Normandy. The duke told Norwich that he supposed he intended to capitulate. "Not at

all," replied he; "but as to-morrow is the feast of the Virgin, to whom I know that you, sir, as well as myself, bear a great devotion, I desire a cessation of arms for that day." The proposal was agreed to, and Norwich, having ordered his forces to prepare all their baggage, marched out next day, and advanced towards the French camp. The besiegers, imagining that they were to be attacked, ran to their arms; but Norwich sent a messenger to the Duke, reminding him of his engagement. The duke, who piqued himself on faithfully keeping his word, exclaimed, "I see the governor has outwitted me, but let us be content with gaining the place;" and the English were allowed to pass through the besieging army unmolested.

By the following stratagem on the part of the Spaniards, in 1597, Amiens was taken. Soldiers, disguised like peasants, conducted a cart loaded with nuts towards the gate of the town, and let them fall, as if accidentally, just as the gate was opened; and while the guard was busied in gathering them up, the Spaniards entering, secured the gate, and thus gave their countrymen the opportunity to come up, and become masters of the town.

According to the testimony of the natives of Congo, says Mr. Maxwell, the country of Sonia, amongst other tribes, at no great distance of time, formed part of the kingdom of Congo, and the people of Sonia were obliged to carry burdens of white sand, from the beach to Banza-Congo, one hundred and fifty miles distant, to form pleasant walks at the royal residence. This servitude greatly exasperated the men of Sonia, whose warlike and independent spirit is now feared and respected by all the neighbouring nations; and, having concealed their weapons in the several burdens

of sand, they were by this contrivance enabled to avenge themselves of the indignity put upon them, and to plunder the city, killing many of the queen's people. Having thus shaken off their yoke, Sonia has since been governed by native princes.

---

## CHAPTER IX.

### MALINGERING, OR SIMULATION OF DISEASES.

Former Prevalence of Malingering in the Army; and the Motives for it—Decline of the Practice—Where most prevalent—The means of Simulation reduced to a System—Cases of simulated Ophthalmia in the 50th Regiment—The Deception wonderfully kept up by many Malingerers—Means of Detection—Simulated Paralysis—Impudent Triumph manifested by Malingerers—Curious case of Hollidge—Gutta Serena, and Nyctalopia counterfeited—Blind Soldiers employed in Egypt—Cure, by actual cautery, of a Malingerer—Simulation of Consumption and other Diseases—Feigned Deafness—Detection of a Man who simulated Deafness—Instances of Self-mutilation committed by Soldiers—Simulation of Death.

A VERY serious evil has existed in the army, resulting from a very general practice of idle and dissolute soldiers in barracks, and even in more active service, feigning diseases and disabilities; for the purpose of either escaping duty, or in the hopes of being altogether discharged from the service, and procuring a pension. This imposture has been termed Malingering, or the simulation of diseases, and the unsuccessful or suspected impostors have been usually called Malingerers. In vulgar English, the trick is called Shamming Abram.

Remarkable ingenuity, and a very considerable knowledge of the powers and effects of medicinal agents, have been shown by those who, *à priori*, would not be suspected of such information: and the

pertinacity shown by the impostors, when the object was to procure their discharge, has been often wonderful.

The reasons which call for, or privilege a soldier to expect, his discharge, are chronic and incurable rather than acute diseases. It is natural, therefore, to find the malingerers most expert in simulating the former, though, at the same time, the more acute diseases have not been less faithfully represented, when the object in view was only a temporary evasion of duty.

This practice has prevailed to a greater or less extent at different periods of our medical military history; and it is gratifying to learn, from authentic sources, that in the present period of highly improved discipline in the British army, there are not probably two malingerers for ten who were found in the military hospitals thirty or forty years since. It also occurs more or less according to the manner of forming a regiment. In some of the cavalry regiments, and some of the Highland and other distinguished infantry battalions, in which, along with a mild but exact discipline, there is a strong attachment to the service, and remarkable *esprit du corps*, there is scarcely an instance of any of those disgraceful attempts to deceive the surgeon; while in regiments which have been hastily recruited, and under circumstances unfavourable to progressive and complete discipline, the system of imposition is perfectly understood. Among those who counterfeit diseases, it has been observed that the Irish are the most numerous, the Scotsmen less so, but malingering seems least of all the vice of English soldiers.

There appears to be a species of free-masonry among soldiers, and thus these methods of imposture

have been systematised, and handed down for the common benefit. A case occurred of a man having a rupture, which on inspection was found to be artificially formed from some written directions, "How to make a rupture," which were produced. The man was discharged by his commanding officer, but the discharge not being backed by the surgeon's recommendatory certificate, he lost his pension; the commanding officer after his return from Corunna met this man perfectly well, following the laborious occupation of a porter.

In the year 1804, the great increase of ophthalmia in the 50th regiment, and the reported detection of frauds in other regiments, led to a suspicion in the mind of the surgeon of that corps, and a consequent investigation, by which a regular correspondence was detected between the men under medical treatment and their parents or friends. Those suffering from ophthalmia, within the walls of the hospital, requested that those without would forward to them corrosive sublimate, lime, and blue-stone; and by the application of these acrid substances to their eyes, they hoped to get them into such a state of disease, as would enable them to procure their discharge, with a pension. And they mentioned the names of men who had been successful by similar means. Proofs of guilt having been established, the delinquents were tried by a court-martial, convicted, and punished.

It is hardly possible to believe, that men would endure not only the inconvenience of a severe ophthalmia, than which, perhaps, nothing is more painful, but would even risk the total loss of sight, for the uncertain prospect of a trifling pension, and with the conviction, that even if they gained it, they reduced themselves to a helpless dependence on others through

life. But it is nevertheless certain that whole wards have been filled with soldiers labouring under this artificially excited disease; this inflammation of the eye having been produced, and maintained, by quicklime, strong infusions of tobacco, Spanish flies, nitrate of silver, and other metallic salts. The inflammation thus caused is most painful, yet it has been kept up under every privation which can make life miserable.

Wonderful indeed is the obstinacy some malingerers evince; night and day, they will remain, with the endurance of a fakir, in positions most irksome, for weeks and months; nay, many men for the same period have, with surprising resolution and recollection, sat and walked with their bodies bent double, without forgetting for one moment the character of their assumed infirmity.

These impostors are most easily discovered by a retaliating deception on the part of the surgeon; he should conceal his suspicions, and appear to give credit to all that is related to him of the history of the disease, and propose some sort of treatment accordingly.

The nervous disorders that are simulated are such as to require a constant and unceasing watchfulness, on the part of the impostor, lest he should betray himself.

Paralysis of one arm was feigned, with great perseverance and consistency, for months; the soldier pretending that he had fallen asleep in the open air, and awoke with his arm benumbed and powerless. This farce he kept up with such boldness, that, being suspected, a court-martial was held on him, and he was even tied up to the halberts to be punished; but the commanding officer thought the evidence not sufficiently convincing. Having, however, subsequently

undergone very severe treatment, and there being no prospect of a pension, he at last gave in.

The unprincipled obstinacy of some individuals even triumphs openly in the success of their imposture. A trooper in the 12th pretended that he had lost the use of his right arm, and after resisting, for a great length of time, severe hospital discipline, he procured his discharge. When he was leaving the regiment, and fairly on the top of the coach, at starting, he waved his paralytic arm in triumph, and cheered at the success of his plan. Another soldier, who pretended that he had lost the use of his lower extremities, was reported unfit for service, and was discharged. When his discharge was obtained, he caused himself, on a field day, to be taken in a cart to the Phœnix Park, and in front of the regiment, drawn up in a line, he had the cart driven under a tree; he then leaped out of the cart, springing up three times, insulted the regiment, and scampered off at full speed.

A third soldier, of the name of Hollidge, pretending to be deaf and dumb after an attack of fever, never for one moment forgot his assumed character, till his purpose was attained. Being useful as a tailor, he was kept for five or six years, subsequent to this pretended calamity, and carried on all communication by writing. On one occasion, whilst practising firing with blank cartridge, an awkward recruit shot Hollidge in the ear, who expressed pain and consternation by a variety of contortions, but never spoke. Not having been heard to articulate for five years, he was at last discharged; he then recovered the use of speech, and a vacancy occurring shortly after, he offered himself to fill the situation, namely, as master-tailor to the regiment.

That species of blindness, thus feelingly described by Milton,

"So thick a *drop serene* hath quenched these orbs,"

and which is that in which no manifest alteration takes place in the eye, has been produced by the application of belladonna. Nyctalopia, or night-blindness, was frequently feigned in Egypt, and nearly half of a corps were, or pretended to be, afflicted with it: as the troops were employed in digging and throwing up fortifications, this state of vision was found of not so much consequence. In transporting the earth, a blind man was joined to, and followed by, one who could see; and when the sentries were doubled, a blind man and one that could see were put together, and not perhaps without advantage, as, during the night, hearing, upon an outpost, is often of more importance than sight.

One unprincipled wretch, in an hospital, pretending to be afflicted with a hopeless complaint, which was a subject of offence to the whole ward, being detected, it was determined to apply the actual cautery. On the first application of the red-hot spatula, this fellow, who for eleven months had lost the use of his lower limbs, gave the man who held his leg so violent a kick, that he threw him down, and instantly exclaimed that he was shamming, and would do his duty if released; but the surgeon declared that he would apply the iron to the other hip, on which he roared out that he had been shamming to get his discharge. To the amusement of all around, he walked to his bed, and when the burned parts were healed, he returned to his duty.

Spitting of blood and consumption are rather favourite diseases with soldiers who seek their discharge from the service through imposture; yet an acute phy-

sician may easily detect the imposition. Palpitation and violent action of the heart the impostors know how to produce, by the juice of hellebore; vomiting by secret pressure on the stomach; tympany, or distention of the body by air, is produced by swallowing, on philosophical and chemical principles, chalk and vinegar.

The acute diseases have many symptoms which are easily simulated, but as easily detected. The appearance of the white tongue is created by rubbing it with chalk, or whitening from the wall; but washing the mouth with water at once proves the deceit. Dr. Hennen, in his Military Surgery, says, "Profligates have, to my knowledge, boasted that they have often received indulgences from the medical officers in consequence of a supposed febrile attack, by presenting themselves after a night's debauch, which they had purposely protracted to aid the deception. Febrile symptoms are also produced by swallowing tobacco-juice. One man, if unwilling to be cured *secundum artem*, was at least anxious to enumerate his symptoms in an orthodox manner, for he had purloined some pages from Zimmerman's Treatise on Dysentery, (the disease he had thought proper to simulate,) from one of the medical officers; and from which he was daily in the habit of recounting a change of symptoms. Stoical indifference to their frequently painful imposture and hardihood in maintaining its character, are the necessary qualifications of malingerers, who have frequently evinced a constancy and fortitude under severe pain and privations, worthy of a better cause."

A patient permitted all the preparatory measures for amputation before he thought proper to relax his knee-joint; and another suffered himself to be almost drowned in a deep lake, into which he was plunged from a boat, before he stretched out his arm to save

himself by swimming, an exercise in which he was known to excel.

Those who affect deafness,* are frequently caught in a snare by opening the conversation with them in a very high tone of voice, but gradually sinking it to its usual compass; when, thrown off his guard, the impostor will reply to such questions as are put to him. A recruit, unwilling to go to the East Indies, feigned deafness; he was admitted into the hospital, and put on spoon-diet: for nine days no notice was taken of him. On the tenth the physician, having made signs of inquiry to him, asked the hospital sergeant what diet he was on? the sergeant answered, "Spoon-diet." The physician, affecting to be angry, said, "Are you not ashamed of yourself, to have kept this man so long on spoon-meat? the poor fellow is nearly starved; let him have a beef-steak and a pint of porter." Murphy could contain himself no longer; he completely forgot his assumed defect, and, with a face full of gratitude, cried, "God bless your honour!

* A rather whimsical scene once took place in a provincial hospital where a patient presented himself for admission. According to the usual custom of that institution, the physician of the week asked the man what his complaint was, but he could get no answer; after several ineffectual attempts, the physician passed him over to the surgeon; he, also, became exhausted in the vain attempt. The pupils, who were present to learn the art of prognosis and diagnosis, had now a good opportunity of initiating themselves in the practice of the usual preliminary inquiries; but the united eloquence of this medical staff could only elicit from the patient the remark that "he was deaf, and hard of hearing." "Yes," replied one and all, "that is clear enough; but," shouting once more into his ear, "what's the matter with you?" This unfortunate person was on the point of being sent back as a hopeless subject, when a conviction came over one of the party, that this obnoxious deafness was the very complaint for which he sought a remedy. The clue once gained, the proper inquiries were set on foot, and the disease went off by beat of *drum*.

you are the best gentleman I have seen for many a day."

During the insurrection in the Kandian country, in 1818, a private belonging to the 19th regiment was sentry at a post, and was occasionally fired at by the enemy from the neighbouring jungle. Availing himself of what appeared a favourable opportunity for getting invalided and sent home, he placed the muzzle of his musket close to the inside of his left leg, and discharging the piece, he blew away nearly the whole of his calf. He asserted, to those who came to his assistance, that the wound had proceeded from a shot of the enemy's from the jungle; but the traces of gunpowder, found in the leg, told a different tale, as well as his musket, which was recently discharged.

A sergeant in the 62nd regiment purchased a pistol, and hired a person to shoot him through the arm; hoping, by these means, to make it appear that he had been fired at by one disaffected to the military, and that he should be discharged with a large pension. In this, however, he was disappointed.

Even death itself has been simulated. When some officers, in India, were breakfasting in the commander's tent, the body of a native, said to have been murdered by the sepoys, was brought in and laid down. The crime could not be brought home to any one of them, yet there was the body. A suspicion, however, crossed the adjutant's mind, and, having the kettle in his hand, a thought struck him that he would pour a little boiling water on the body; he did so; upon which the murdered remains started up, and scampered off.

## CHAPTER X.

MISCELLANEOUS IMPOSTORS AND IMPOSTURES.

Mary Tofts, the Rabbit Breeder, of Godalming—Progress and Detection of her Impostures—Poisoning of St. Andre—The Bottle Conjuror—Advertisements on this Occasion—Riot produced by the Fraud—Squibs and Epigrams to which it gave rise—Case of Elizabeth Canning—Violent Controversy which arose out of it—She is found guilty of Perjury and transported—The Cock Lane Ghost—Public Excitement occasioned by it—Detection of the Fraud—Motive for the Imposture—The Stockwell Ghost—The Sampford Ghost—Mystery in which the Affair was involved—Astonishing Instance of Credulity in Perigo and his Wife—Diabolical Conduct of Mary Bateman—She is hanged for Murder—Metamorphosis of the Chevalier d'Eon—Multifarious Disguises of Price, the Forger—Miss Robertson—The fortunate Youth—The Princess Olive—Caraboo—Pretended Fasting—Margaret Senfrit—Catherine Binder—The Girl of Unna—The Osnaburg Girl—Anne Moore.

Towards the close of the year 1726, one of the most extraordinary and impudent impostures on record was carried into execution by a woman named Mary Tofts, the wife of a poor journeyman cloth-worker at Godalming, in Surrey. She is described as having been of "a healthy, strong constitution, small size, fair complexion, a very stupid and sullen temper, and unable to write or read." Stupid as she was supposed to be, she had, however, art enough to keep up for a considerable time the credit of her fraud. She pretended to bring forth rabbits; and she accounted for this monstrous deviation from the laws of nature, by saying, that "as she was weeding in a field, she saw a rabbit spring up near her, after which she ran, with another woman that was at work just by her; this set her a longing for rabbits, being then, as she thought, five weeks gone with child; the other woman perceiving she was uneasy, charged her with longing

for the rabbit they could not eateh, but she denied it. Soon after, another rabbit sprung up near the same plaee, which she endeavoured likewise to catch. The same night she dreamt that she was in a field with those two rabbits in her lap, and awaked with a sick fit, which lasted till morning; from that time, for above three months, she had a eonstant and strong desire to eat rabbits, but being very poor and indigent eould not proeure any."

At first sight, it would seem that so gross an imposition, as that which was attempted by Mary Tofts, must have been unanimously scouted. But this was by no means the ease. So well did she manage, and so ready are some people to be deeeived, that she aetually deluded her medieal attendant, Mr. Howard, a man of probity, who had praetised for thirty years. There ean be no doubt of his belief that, in the eourse of about a month, he had aided her to bring forth nearly twenty rabbits.

The news of these marvellous births spread far and wide, and soon found numerous believers. It attracted the attention of even George the First, who sent down to Godalming his house-surgeon, Mr. Ahlers, to inquire into the faet. Ahlers went baek to London fully eonvineed that he had obtained oeular and tangible proof of the truth of the story; so mueh so, indeed, that he promised to procure for Mary a pension. Mr. St. Andre, the king's surgeon and anatomist, was despatched in the eourse of a day or two, to make a further examination. He also returned to the metropolis a firm believer. The rabbits, whieh he and Ahlers earried with them, as testimonies, had the honour of being disseeted before his majesty. An elaborate report of all the eireumstanees relative to their produetion and disseetion, and

to his visit to Godalming, was published by St. Andre, and the public mind consequently began to be agitated in an extraordinary manner. A furious controversy arose between the credulous and the incredulous, in which Whiston is said to have borne a part, by writing a pamphlet, to show that the miracle was the exact completion of a prophecy in Esdras. On the other hand, the caricaturists of the incredulous faction exerted themselves to cast ridicule on their opponents. Among these was Hogarth, who published an engraving called Cunicularii, or the Wise Men of Godliman.

Though the report, by St. Andre, contained many circumstances which were palpably calculated to excite a suspicion of fraud, the multitude was as blind to them as he had been. The delusion continued to spread, and even the king himself was enrolled among the believers. The rent of rabbit-warrens, it is affirmed, sunk to nothing, as no one would presume to eat a rabbit. The trick, was, however, on the point of being found out. To Queen Caroline, then Princess of Wales, is ascribed the merit of having been active in promoting measures to undeceive the people.

The miraculous Mary Tofts was now brought to town, where she could be more closely watched than at Godalming, and prevented from obtaining the means of carrying on her imposture. Among those who took a part on this occasion, the most conspicuous was Sir Richard Manningham, an eminent physician and Fellow of the Royal Society; and he had at length the satisfaction of detecting her. She held out, however, till her courage was shaken by a threat to perform a dangerous operation upon her, which threat was backed by another from a magistrate, that she should be sent to prison. She then confessed, that

the fraud had been suggested to her by a woman, who told her, that she could put her into a way of getting a good livelihood, without being obliged to work for it as formerly, and promised continually to supply her with rabbits, for which she was to receive a part of the gain. The farce terminated by the Godalming miracle-monger being committed to Tothill Fields Bridewell.

The reputation of St. Andre, who had previously been much favour at court, was greatly injured by his conduct in this affair. The public attention had once before been directed to him by a mysterious circumstance; and his enemies did not fail now to advert to that circumstance, and to charge him with having himself played the part of an impostor. It appears that in February, 1724, he was summoned to visit a patient, whom he had never before seen. The messenger led him, in the dark, through numerous winding alleys and passages, to a house in a court, where he found the woman for whom he was to prescribe. The man, after having introduced him, went out, and soon returned with three glasses of liquor on a plate, one of which St. Andre was prevailed on to take; but, "finding the liquor strong and ill-tasted, he drank very little of it." Before he reached his home he began to be ill, and soon manifested all the symptoms of having taken poison. The government offered a reward of two hundred pounds for the detection of the offender, but he was never discovered. It was now asserted, by the enemies of St. Andre, that the story of having been poisoned was a mere fabrication, for the purpose of bringing him into practice. This, however, could not have been the case; for the report, signed by six eminent physicians, who attended him, abundantly proves that he was, for nearly a fortnight,

in the utmost danger, and that, according to all appearance, his sufferings were caused by poison. We may, therefore, conclude that, though he was an egregious dupe, with respect to Mary Tofts, he was not, in this instance, an impostor :

> "For when a man beats out his brains,
> The devil's in it if he feigns."

In 1749, three-and-twenty years after the exposure of Mary Tofts, there appeared, about the middle of January, the ensuing advertisement, which seems to have been intended to try how far the credulous folly of the town might be worked upon.

"At the new theatre in the Haymarket, on Monday next, the 16th instant, is to be seen, a person who performs the several most surprising things following : viz. first he takes a common walking-cane from any of the spectators, and thereon plays the music of every instrument now in use, and likewise sings to surprising perfection. Secondly, he presents you with a common wine-bottle, which any one present may first examine ; this bottle is placed on a table, in the middle of the stage, and he (without any equivocation) goes into it, in the sight of all the spectators and sings in it ; during his stay in the bottle, any person may handle it, and see plainly that it does not exceed a common tavern bottle. Those on the stage or in the boxes may come in masked habits (if agreeable to them), and the performer (if desired) will inform them who they are." The display of these wonders was to occupy two hours and a half. The advertisement also promised that the conjuror, after the performance, would show to any gentlemen or ladies, for, as Trapbois phrases it, a proper "con-si-de-ra-tion," the likeness of any deceased friend or relative, with

which they might also converse; would tell their most secret thoughts; and would give them a full view of persons, whether dead or alive, who had injured them.

At the same time with the above advertisement, there came forth another, which may have either been intended to put the public on their guard by its out-heroding Herod, or to make their credulity, if possible, still more glaring, in case they should accept the invitation of the Bottle Conjuror. It purported to be issued by Signor Capitello Jumpedo, lately arrived from Italy, "a surprising dwarf, no taller than a tobacco-pipe," who could perform many wonderful equilibres on the tight and slack rope, transform his body into above ten thousand different shapes and postures, and who, after having diverted the spectators two hours and a half, would "open his mouth wide, and jump down his own throat." This most "wonderfullest wonder of all wonders as ever the world wondered at," expressed his willingness to join in performance with the Bottle Conjuror Musician.

Though one might suppose that nothing short of insanity or idiocy could bring spectators on such an occasion, yet it is certain that the theatre was thronged with people of all degrees, from the highest ranks of the peerage down to such of the humblest class as could raise two shillings for admission to the gallery. That nothing might be wanting to try the patience of the spectators, not a single fiddle had been provided to amuse them. At length, tired of waiting, they became restive; cat-calls, vociferations, and beating of feet and sticks on the floor, were heard in discordant chorus. At this moment a man came from behind the scenes, bowed, and announced that, if the performer did not appear, the money

should be returned. This annunciation was succeeded by another person starting up in the pit, and stating that, if double prices were given, the conjuror would get into a pint bottle. This seems to have brought the multitude to the use of the small portion of sense which nature had bestowed on them. They discovered that they had been cheated, and they prepared to take vengeance on the cheater. The throwing of a lighted candle from one of the boxes into the pit was the signal for riot. All who thought that, in such cases, the better half of valour is discretion, now became anxious to secure their retreat. A rush accordingly took place towards the doors, and numerous were the wigs, hats, swords, canes, and shoes, that were lost in consequence. As the more timid part of the crowd forced their way out, the mob which surrounded the house forced their way in. Joined by these allies, the party which had remained behind began, and speedily completed, the work of destruction. The benches were torn up, the boxes pulled down, and the scenes broken to pieces; the fragments were then taken into the street, a huge bonfire was made of them, and the stage curtain was hoisted on a pole, as a standard, above the fire. The guards were at last sent for, but before their arrival the mob had disappeared, leaving nothing but smoking embers and a dismantled theatre.

Foote and others were accused of having originated or shared in this trick; but they disavowed any participation in it, and there seems no reason to doubt their veracity. Some thick-skulled bigots gravely asserted, that it was invented by a Jesuit, "to try how ripe the nation was to swallow the absurdities of transubstantiation." With more likelihood it was said that, in order to win a wager which he had laid

respecting the extreme gullibility of the public, the scheme was contrived by a mischievous young nobleman.

For some time after the event, the newspapers were filled with squibs and epigrams. Among the advertisements in ridicule of the bottle-conjuror's, one of the best purported to be from "the body-surgeon of the Emperor of Monœmungi." He thus terminated the description of his budget of wonders: "He opens the head of a justice of peace, takes out his brains, and exchanges them for those of a calf; the brains of a beau, for those of an ass; and the heart of a bully, for that of a sheep; which operations render the persons more rational and sociable creatures than ever they were in their lives."

In the next instance of imposture which occurred, those who were misled could hardly be considered as blameworthy, the circumstances being such as to account for their erroneous judgment. The case to which allusion is here made, was that of Elizabeth Canning, in the year 1753. This female, who was about eighteen years of age, after having been absent twenty-eight days, returned home in a squalid and apparently half-starved condition. The story which she told was that, as she was proceeding at night from her uncle's to the house of the person with whom she lived as servant, she was attacked by two men, in Moorfields, who first robbed her, gave her a blow on the temple, and then dragged her along, she being part of the time in fits, till they reached a house of ill-fame, kept by Susannah Wells, at Enfield Wash.

On her arrival there, she was accosted by a gipsy, named Mary Squires, who asked her if she would "go their way; for if she would, she should have fine clothes." Supposing that Squires alluded to prostitu-

tion, Canning replied in the negative; Squires, upon this, ripped up the lace of her stays with a knife, took away the stays, and thrust her into a back room like a hayloft, the window of which was boarded inside. In that room she was imprisoned for twenty-seven days; her only subsistence being a scanty portion of bread, some water, and a small mince-pie, which she chanced to have in her pocket. At last, she bethought her of breaking down the board, after which she crept on a penthouse, whence she dropped on the ground. She then made the best of her way home.

Universal pity was excited by the tale of her sufferings, and a subscription was raised for her. The most violent public indignation was expressed against the two criminals; and while this ferment was at its height, Wells and Squires were brought to trial. The evidence of Elizabeth Canning was corroborated by that of Virtue Hall, and by various circumstances, and the jury found both of the prisoners guilty. Squires was condemned to death, and Wells was ordered to be branded, and imprisoned for six months.

Squires would certainly have suffered had not Sir Crisp Gascoyne, who was then Lord Mayor, fortunately interposed in her favour. Squires herself solemnly declared that she could bring many witnesses to prove that she was in the West of England during the whole of the time that was sworn to by Canning. There were, besides, some startling discrepancies between Canning's evidence and the real situation of places and things; and to render the matter still more doubtful, Virtue Hall, the main prop of Canning's story, retracted her evidence. Sir Crisp Gascoyne succeeded in obtaining a respite for Squires, during which time so much testimony was obtained in her behalf, that a free pardon was granted to her. Such,

however, was the general prejudice in Canning's favour, that the benevolent exertions of Sir Crisp rendered him extremely unpopular. Floods of ink were expended in pamphlets by her defenders, among whom was the highly-gifted author of Tom Jones. Her opponents were equally active.

The mass of evidence against Canning at length became so enormous, that it was resolved to put her upon her trial for perjury. The trial lasted five days, and more than a hundred and twenty witnesses were examined. Upwards of forty of them were brought forward to testify as to the movements of Squires, and they traced her journeyings day by day, and proved, by a chain of evidence of which not a single link was wanting, that during the whole of the time charged against her by Canning she was far distant in the west of England. The story told by Canning was also shown to be in some parts contradictory, and in others at variance with the facts. In conclusion, she was found guilty, and was sentenced to seven years' transportation. In August 1754, she was conveyed to New England, where she is said to have married advantageously. Some time before her departure, she published a declaration in which she repeated her charge against Squires, in spite of the triumphant manner in which that charge had been refuted; and, blindly faithful to her cause, many of her partisans obstinately persevered in asserting her innocence.

A few years subsequently to the affair of Elizabeth Canning, there occurred an event, which amply proved that superstition and credulity were as flourishing as ever. In January, 1762, the whole town was thrown into a state of excitement by the imposture which bears the name of "the Cock-lane Ghost," so called from the place where the mummery was performed, and the

supposed agent in the performance. The scene in which the farce commenced was the house of one Parsons, the parish clerk of St. Sepulchre's. As a preliminary to the proceedings, it was reported that, nearly two years before the affair gained notoriety, alarming knockings and scratchings had been heard by the daughter of Parsons, a girl about twelve years old, and that she and others had seen, at her father's house, the apparition of a woman, surrounded by a blazing light. The girl, on being questioned as to whom the apparition resembled, said it was like Mrs. Kent, who had formerly been a lodger there, and had died of the smallpox since her removal. The next step was to throw out mysterious hints that Mrs. Kent had been murdered.

These rumours were soon spread abroad, and the credulous and the curious rushed with headlong haste to witness the new marvels. The knockings and scratchings had by this time become exceedingly violent. It was now sagely resolved that several gentlemen, among whom a clergyman acted a prominent part, should sit up by the bed-side of Miss Parsons, to question the supposed ghost. As the ghost, it was imagined, might be dumb, or have forgotten its native tongue, the clergyman settled that it should reply by knocks; one knock being an affirmative answer, and two knocks a negative. This arrangement having been made, the ghost was interrogated, and it replied, that it was the spirit of a woman named Kent, who had been poisoned.

As some persons suspected imposture, the girl was removed from her home, and was successively put to bed at several houses; the number of watchers was increased to nearly twenty, several of whom were clergymen and ladies. Still the knockings and scratch-

ings were continued, and the same answers as before were made to questions. At length, on being pressed to give some proof of its veracity, the ghost consented to attend one of the gentlemen into the vault where the body was buried, and manifest its presence by a knock upon the coffin.

When the appointed hour arrived, "the spirit was very seriously advertised, that the person to whom the promise was made of striking the coffin, was then about to visit the vault, and that the performance of the promise was then claimed. The company, at one, went into the church, and the gentleman to whom the promise was made, went, with one more, into the vault. The spirit was solemnly required to perform its promise, but nothing more than silence ensued. The person supposed to be accused by the ghost then went down, with several others, but no effect was perceived. Upon their return they examined the girl, but could draw no confession from her. Between two and three she desired, and was permitted, to go home with her father."

This want of punctuality in the ghost gave a fatal blow to its reputation. Even the most besotted of the believers were staggered by it. A flimsy attempt was therefore made to restore the ghost's credit, by asserting that the coffin and corpse had been removed, which, of course, had prevented the spirit from giving the signal; but on examination they were found to be safe in the vault. Stricter precautions were now taken to guard against deception being practised by the girl; her bed was slung like a hammock, in the middle of the room, and she was closely watched. Driven to her last shifts, she contrived to secrete, but not unseen, a bit of board previously to her being put to bed, and having, as she thought, secured the neces-

sary materials for carrying on the trick, she ventured to declare that she would bring the ghost at six the next morning. In the morning she accordingly began to make the accustomed sounds, and, on being asked if she had in the bed any wood to strike upon, she positively denied the fact. The bed-clothes were then opened, the board was found, and this simple process annihilated the Cock-lane Ghost.

Mr. Kent, the accused person, had, in the mean while, proved his innocence, by certificates from the physician and apothecary who attended upon the deceased female. The base attack upon his character appears to have been prompted by revenge. While lodging with Parsons he had lent him some money, which, after much forbearance, he was compelled to recover by a suit at law. The malignant offender, however, did not escape punishment; he, with others who had lent themselves to his imposture, being ultimately brought to trial, and found guilty of a conspiracy.

In 1778, the Stockwell Ghost, as it was denominated, spread terror in the village from whence it derived its name, and was for some time a subject of general conversation and wonderment. Its pranks have been described in Sir Walter Scott's amusing "Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft," and consequently it is unnecessary to dwell upon them here.

For a long period after this, it would seem that ghosts were either out of fashion, or had become averse from exhibiting before multitudes, and were determined to confine their efforts to the scaring of country bumpkins. It was not till 1810 that a supernatural case of any importance occurred. This case was, it must be owned, far more interesting and startling than its predecessors, it having been managed

with such consummate skill as to baffle all attempts to penetrate the mystery. The house of Mr. Chave at Sampford Peverell, in Devonshire, was the scene on which the wonders were acted for several months. The spiritual agent appears to have occasionally assumed the form of some non-descript animal, which always eluded pursuit, and to have had an extreme dislike of women, whom it always pummelled unmercifully. The Rev. C. Colton, the author of "Lacon," who endeavoured, but in vain, to find out the cause of the disturbance, tells us, that he examined several females who had slept in the house, many of whom were on oath, and they all, without exception, agreed in affirming, that "their night's rest was invariably destroyed by violent blows from some invisible hand, by an unaccountable and rapid drawing and withdrawing of the curtains, by a suffocating and almost inexpressible weight, and by a repetition of sounds, so loud as at times to shake the whole room." Numerous other respectable witnesses also testified, and offered to do so on oath, to various astonishing circumstances. Suspicions having been expressed that the whole was a juggle, carried on by Mr. Chave and his servants, they made an affidavit, denying, in the most explicit terms, any knowledge whatever of the manner in which the sights and sounds were produced. A reward of 250*l.* was at length offered to any one who would throw light on this obscure subject. Tempting as this bait was, no one came forward to seize it. After a while the hubbub ceased; but, like Junius, the mischievous disturber of Sampford Peverell remains to this day undiscovered.

In another part of the country, a few years before the Sampford ghost began his vagaries, a fatal example of excessive credulity was afforded by a man and

his wife, named Perigo. The wife being ill, Perigo went to one Mary Bateman to cure her. Bateman declined the task, but said that she had a friend at Scarborough, a Miss Blyth, who could "read the stars," and remove all ailments whether of body or mind. To enable this reader of the stars to gain a knowledge of the disease, it was said to be necessary that the sick woman should send her petticoat; it was accordingly delivered to Bateman. There was, in truth, no such person as Blyth; but a pretended answer from her was read to the credulous Perigos, in which they were told that they must communicate with her through the medium of Bateman. As a commencement, they were directed to give Bateman five guinea notes, who would return an equal number in a small bag; but they were informed that if curiosity induced them to look into the bag the charm would be broken, and sudden death would ensue. In this manner forty guineas were at various times obtained, all of which, they were assured, would be found in the bag when the moment came for its being opened. Demand followed demand without intermission, and still the poor deluded beings continued to satisfy them. Clothing of all kinds, bedding, a set of china, edible articles, and thirty pounds more, were among the sacrifices which were made to the rapacious impostor. On one occasion the fictitious Miss Blyth ordered Perigo to buy her a live goose, for the purpose of being offered up as a burnt-offering to her familiar, for the purpose of destroying the works of darkness.

The work of darkness was, indeed, approaching to its consummation. Beggared by the repeated calls on his purse, Perigo began to be anxious to open the bags, and regain possession of the contents. Unable any longer to put him off, the female fiend brought a

packet, which she said came from Scarborough, and contained a potent charm. The contents were to be mixed in a pudding, prepared for the purpose, and of that pudding no one was to eat but Perigo and his wife. They obeyed, and the consequences were such as might be expected. The husband ate sparingly, for he disliked the taste, and he escaped with only suffering severe torture; the wife fell a victim.

It will scarcely be believed that, so deeply rooted was her credulity, the unfortunate woman, even when she was almost in her death agony, extorted from her husband a promise to follow the directions of the murderess. Two or three days after the wife had ceased to exist, a letter came, pretending to be from Miss Blyth, which seemed more like the composition of an incarnate demon than of a human being. Instead of expressing the slightest sorrow, it attributed the death of the woman to her having dared to touch the bags; and it added a threat which was not unlikely to send a weak-minded man to join his murdered partner. "Inasmuch as your wife," said the writer, "has done this wicked thing, she shall rise from the grave; stroke your face with the cold hand of death; and you shall lose the use of one side."

Had his blood been any thing but snow-broth, so much injury and insult must have roused him. But the wretched gull long persisted to yield a blind obedience to his infamous deceiver, who fleeced him without mercy. It was not till he was rendered desperate by the threats of his creditors that he ventured to open the bags. He, of course, found them filled with trash. His neighbours, to whom he bewailed his hard fate, were possessed of more courage and sense than he was, and they carried Mary Bateman before a magistrate. She was committed for the murder

of the wife, was found guilty at York assizes, and suffered on the gallows the penalty of her crime.

The next character who claims our attention, though living for a great part of his life under a disguise, must not be branded as an impostor. The person alluded to is the celebrated Chevalier, generally known as Madam, D'Eon. This remarkable individual, who was born at Tonnerre, in France, in 1728, was of a good family. D'Eon was a man of brilliant parts, a writer by no means contemptible on various subjects, an accomplished diplomatist, and a brave officer. At one period he was minister plenipotentiary to the British court. A bitter quarrel with the Count de Guerchy, who succeeded him as ambassador, is assigned as the reason for his not returning to France. It is probable, however, that the real cause of his stay in this country, was his acting as private agent of Louis the Fifteenth, by whom he was allowed a pension. D'Eon continued to reside in London for fourteen years, and was in habits of friendship with the most distinguished persons.

Now comes the mystery; which still remains, and perhaps must ever remain, unsolved. Rumours, at first faint, but daily acquiring strength, had long been floating about, that D'Eon was a woman. There were certain feminine indications in his voice and person, and he was known to be averse from all affairs of gallantry, and to manifest extreme caution with respect to females. At length it began to be generally believed, both in England and France, that he had no title to wear the dress of a male. Wagers, to a large amount, were laid upon this subject; and, in 1777, one of them produced an indecent trial before Lord Mansfield. "The action was brought by Mr. Hayes, surgeon, against Jacques, a broker and under-

writer, for the recovery of seven hundred pounds; Jacques having, about six years before, received premiums of fifteen guineas per cent., for every one of which he stood engaged to return a hundred guineas, whenever it should be proved that the Chevalier D'Eon was actually a woman." In this cause, three seemingly unexceptionable witnesses, two of whom were of the medical profession, positively swore that they had obtained such proof as admitted of no contradiction that D'Eon was of the female sex. A verdict was in consequence given for the plaintiff; but it was afterwards set aside on a point of law.

The humiliating manner in which, by this trial, he was brought before the English public, induced D'Eon to quit England. But it is a singular circumstance that M. de Vergennes, one of the French ministers, in a letter which he wrote to D'Eon, declared it to be the king's will that he "should resume the dress of his sex,"—meaning the dress of a woman—and that this injunction was repeated on the Chevalier arriving in France. It was obeyed, and, till the end of his long life, D'Eon dressed, and was looked upon, as one of the softer sex. Early in the French revolution, he returned to England, still as a female, and remained here till his decease in 1810. Death proved the folly of those who had forced him into petticoats; for his manhood was placed beyond all doubt by an anatomical examination of the body. Why he was metamorphosed, and why he continued to acquiesce in the change when he might have safely asserted his sex, there appear to be no means of discovering.

A being of a far different stamp comes next before us; Charles Price, nicknamed Patch, a man who applied talents of no common order to the vilest purposes. He was possessed of courage, penetration,

foresight, and presence of mind, and he degraded all these qualities by rendering them subservient to fraud. No man was ever so perfect a master of the art of disguise. Price, who was the son of a clothesman in Monmouth Street, was not out of his boyhood when he began to manifest his skill in cheating. When he was an apprentice, he put on the garb of a gentleman, assumed the name of Bolingbroke, and defrauded his master of a large quantity of goods. So well did he act his part, that his master did not know him, and, when Price returned home, he was ordered to carry the goods to the pretended Mr. Bolingbroke. His dishonest practices were at last detected, and he ran away. For this conduct his father disinherited him.

Price was afterwards a valet, and went the tour of Europe with Sir Francis Blake Delaval. While he was at Copenhagen, he wrote a pamphlet in vindication of the unfortunate Queen Matilda. He was subsequently a brewer, a distiller, an inmate of the King's Bench for having defrauded the revenue, a lottery-office keeper, and a gambler in the Alley. His plausible manners gained for him a wife with a considerable fortune, but he soon dissipated the money. About 1780, he began to forge upon the Bank. To detect him was difficult, for he made his own paper, with the proper water-marks, manufactured his own ink, engraved his own plates, and, as far as possible, was his own negotiator. His career, in spite of every effort to arrest it, was continued for six years; in the course of which time he is said to have assumed no less than forty-five disguises; he was by turns thin, corpulent, active, decrepit, blooming with health, and sinking under disease. At last, in 1786, he was committed to Tothill-fields Bridewell, where, to escape

the shame of a public execution, he put a period to his existence.

Numerous instances might be adduced of individuals gifted with abilities far inferior to those of Price, who have levied contributions to an enormous amount upon the credulity of the public. It must suffice to give a specimen of them:—one was Miss Robertson, of Blackheath, who, by representing herself as having had a large estate bequeathed to her, contrived to make a multitude of egregious dupes; another was an adventurer known as "The Fortunate Youth," who employed a similar pretence, and was equally successful. A third, whose pretension took a higher flight, must not be forgotten. The late Mrs. Serres, who assumed the title of Princess Olive of Cumberland, and pretended also to be descended from a line of Polish princes, has secured for herself a conspicuous place in the annals of imposture.

The most amusing, and perhaps the least noxious, of modern cheats, was a female, who assumed the name of Caraboo. She pretended to be a native of Javasu, in the Indian Ocean, and to have been carried off by pirates, by whom she had been sold to the captain of a brig. Her first appearance was in the spring of 1817, at Almondsbury, in Gloucestershire. Having been ill used on board the ship, she had jumped overboard, she said, swam on shore, and wandered about for six weeks before she came to Almondsbury. The deception was tolerably well sustained for two months; but, at the end of that time, she disappeared, probably being aware that she was on the point of being detected. It was found that she was a native of Witheridge, in Devonshire, where her father was a cobbler. Caraboo appears to have taken flight to America. How she fared in that quarter of the

world is not known; but, in 1824, she returned to England, and hired apartments in New Bond-street, where she exhibited herself to the public. She seems to have excited little attention, and was soon forgotten.

A very frequent case of imposture has been that of women pretending to have the power of going without food, and to have fasted for two, or three, or more years. Irksome and distressing as such a deceit must be, it has often been carried on, for a short time, so dexterously as to lull the suspicions of those around, who, being thus thrown off their guard, were satisfied that the abstinence, which perhaps was really persevered in for a short time, could be prolonged to any indefinite period.

Margaret Senfrit, the girl of Spires, was believed to have fasted three years. Catherine Binder, after continuing an alleged fast for five years, was separated from her parents, and placed under the care of four women, who affirmed that she had not eaten or drunk anything for fourteen days, but had washed her mouth with brandy and water, to comfort her head and heart,

A young girl of Unna, who was said to have remained without eating or drinking for six months, was closely watched; the first night after her removal she was caught drinking a large cup of ale.

About 1800, the Osnaburg girl created great speculation. She had fasted, by report, a long time. Doubts arising, she was watched, and escaped the ordeal with her integrity unimpeached; but, a second watching having been undertaken by two medical men, her tricks were soon discovered.

Between 1808 and 1813, considerable interest was excited by various notices, in the newspapers and

journals, respecting a woman of the name of Moore, living at Tutbury, in Staffordshire, who, from long illness and other causes, was reported to have lost all desire for food, and at length acquired the art of living without any nourishment at all. No great alteration was visible in her appearance, her memory was very strong, and her piety extremely edifying. Being backed by medical testimony, the account was received as entitled to some credit; but all doubts were removed by watching the patient for sixteen days and nights, which took place in September, 1808. From that time she attracted crowds of visiters, from all parts of the country, who witnessed her condition with a sort of religious awe, and seldom quitted her without exercising their generosity towards her. Dr. Henderson visited her in 1812, in company with Mr. Lawrence. She was in bed, with a large Bible before her; she asserted she had tasted no solid food for upwards of five years, and no drink for four, and had no desire for either; and that she had not slept or lain down in bed for more than three. They left her, fully satisfied, from certain circumstances, that the history of her long fasting was a mere fabrication; and Dr. Henderson adduced many arguments to prove the absurdity of the imposture. The greatest wonder in the history was the blind infatuation of those who could for an instant entertain an idea of its truth.

Her dread of the repetition of the watching was a very suspicious circumstance, and seemed to imply that she had narrowly escaped detection; she said, that for nobody in the world would she undergo a repetition: her attendant styled it "a trial for her life." Yet watching her for a fortnight, though sufficiently irksome, could have had nothing alarming,

unless it involved the risk of starvation, which, it was afterwards proved, it did in reality.

At the earnest solicitation of the Rev. Legh Richmond, she, however, consented to undergo another watching, assenting to its propriety as necessary to the establishment of truth. In April 1813, the watch was commenced by a committee of nineteen gentlemen, four remaining at one time in the room. She caught a severe cold whilst removing her from her bed, and at the end of a week she had a very serious attack of fever. On the ninth day she thought herself dying, and was very anxious to make an affidavit as to her innocence of all imposition. With great solemnity, she said, "In the face of Almighty God, and on my dying bed, I declare that I have used no deception, and that for six years I have taken nothing, but once, the inside of a few black currants; for the last four years and a half, nothing at all." In spite of this protestation, strong suspicions of fraud were excited, and, finally, evidence of guilt and falsehood were discovered. Concealment was now useless, and at last she publicly expressed her contrition for her long-continued imposture.

At one time, two hundred pounds, from the contributions of a wondering and credulous population, was placed for her in the hands of two respectable persons in town; but this sum was subsequently withdrawn. The total amount of what she received was not known; but, as her children and one or two attendants lived with her during the six years of deception, it must have been pretty considerable.

## CHAPTER XI.

### LITERARY IMPOSTORS AND DISGUISES.

Controversy respecting the works of Homer; Arguments of the Disputants—Controversy on the supposed Epistles of Phalaris—Opinion of Sir William Temple on the Superiority of the Ancients—Dissertation of Dr. Bentley on the Epistles of Phalaris—He proves them to be a Forgery—Doubts as to the Anabasis being the work of Xenophon—Arguments of Mr. Mitford in the Affirmative — Aleyonius accused of having plagiarised from, and destroyed, Cicero's Treatise "De Gloria" —Curious Mistake as to Sir T. More's Utopia—The Icon Basilike—Disputes to which it gave rise—Arguments, pro and con, as to the real Author of it—Lauder's Attempt to prove Milton a Plagiarist—Refutation of him by Dr. Douglas—His Interpolations—George Psalmanazar—His Account of Formosa—His Repentance and Piety—Publication of Ossian's Poems by Mr. Macpherson—Their Authenticity is doubted—Report of the Highland Society on the Subject—Pseudonymous and anonymous Works—Letters of Junius—The Drapier's Letters—Tale of a Tub—Gulliver's Travels—The Waverley Novels—Chatterton and the Rowley Poems—W. H. Ireland and the Shakspearian Forgeries—Damberger's pretended Travels—Poems of Clotilda de Surville—Walladmor—Hunter, the American—Donvill's Travels in Africa.

The history of literature, from the earliest times, has recorded singular instances of imposture and unacknowledged plagiarism; in many of which the talent necessary to design, as well as the perseverance to develop, the proposed fraud, were worthy of a better direction.

In the opinion of the learned critic, Dr. Bentley, the practice of writing spurious books is almost as old as letters themselves; but that it chiefly prevailed when the kings of Pergamus and Alexandria, rivalling one another in the magnificence and copiousness of their libraries, gave great prices for treatises that had the names of celebrated authors attached to them.

Modern critics have, with much learned ingenuity, reasoned upon the possibilities and probabilities of the celebrated poems of the Iliad and Odyssey not being the performance of one man. Though, at this distance of time, the question must be settled rather by individual conviction, than received as a decided point in the history of literature; yet still it may not be uninteresting to state the arguments which have been brought forward against the authenticity of Homer's poems, or rather against the existence of Homer himself.

Fabricius has collected a number of fragments and accounts of authors who have been supposed more ancient than Homer; most of these, however, have been regarded by the learned as forgeries, originating in the love of gain, and encouraged by the credulity of the Greeks.

It has been maintained, that neither the Iliad nor the Odyssey is the work of a single mind, but a collection of the songs of the wandering rhapsodists, as they were called, and, for the first time, completely arranged at Athens under the inspection of Pisistratus, or his son. Pisistratus is mentioned by Ælian as the compiler of the Iliad and the Odyssey. This theory reduces Homer to a name merely; or, at best, as only one bard more celebrated than the rest, or, perhaps, as nothing more than a successful reciter. This idea respecting the authenticity of the above poems, was again started, about the close of the seventeenth century, by Perrault and others, but was received with derision by the learned world.

More recently, it has been again advocated, with great learning, by Heyne; and, with wonderful acuteness, by Professor Wolf of Berlin.

It appears from the best accounts, that these poems,

said to be the production of Homer, were first brought into Greece by Lycurgus; who had heard them in the course of his travels among the Chians, by means of the recitation of their rhapsodists; nor were they then in that perfect form in which they were afterwards presented by Pisistratus, to whom the credit of the arrangement appears to have been generally given by Cicero and others.

The arguments used by Wolf and Heyne are, firstly, the improbability that in such a dark age, as that in which Homer is reputed to have lived, and of which so few traces are left, one man should have been capable of composing works of such extent, consistency, and poetical elevation, as the Iliad or Odyssey.

Secondly, that poems of such a length should have been composed and preserved entire, without being committed to writing. Now there is not the least trace, even in tradition, of any complete copy of Homer's works, till the existence of the Athenian edition, or at least of that of Lycurgus. No notice is taken in the poems of any epistolary correspondence, though in the Odyssey many opportunities occur where such might have been introduced.

Thirdly, the Greek alphabet was not received at Athens till the ninety-fourth Olympiad, that is, about four hundred and three years before Christ, whereas the works of Homer were dated from the nine hundred and seventh year before Christ. The writing materials also must have been scanty and inadequate to the preservation of a poem of fifteen thousand lines; stone and metal being the only materials on which, in early times, characters were imprinted.

Fourthly, in these ancient poems, no reference is ever made to written treaties; treaties being then only verbal, and ratified by superstitious rites.

Fifthly, the rhapsodists flourished in the earliest times, answering to the Celtic bards in our history: and all who followed this profession recited from memory; by the exercise of which faculty they derived honour and emolument. Without the modern aids to composition, how, it was asked, could any poet keep the plan, or previous part of his design, in his recollection? or, if that were possible, could he have ever expected to procure an audience, to whom such a work should be submitted?

It is more than probable, that the original poems, or series of poetical sketches, were exposed to perpetual variation, from passing through the heads of the rhapsodists; many of whom were, doubtless, also poets, and who, in the warmth of recitation, would make changes unconsciously, or, perhaps, purposely introduced them, to produce greater effect on their hearers. From Ælian we learn that anciently the books of the Iliad or Odyssey were never recited in the order in which they now stand.

The above form the chief grounds of argument used by those who are anxious to disturb our natural belief, as it were, of the integrity of Homer's poems. On the contrary side, it is asserted, that other untaught poets have arisen, who, without the aid of external culture, have breathed the tenderest and most beautiful thoughts in poetry; and it is also urged, that, granting the sublimity of Homer's poems as they stand, it is necessary, if we adopt the opponent system, to come to the belief that, in a barbarous age, instead of *one* being marvellously gifted with poetical powers, there were *many*, a complete race of bards, such as has never been since seen.

The objection arising from the ignorance of letters, and want of writing materials, has been considered

more formidable; but so much uncertainty attends the account of the introduction of letters into Greece, that it must undoubtedly have been of high antiquity.

That the memory of the reciter should be capable of retaining the whole poem does not appear so incredible in those times, when the minds of men were not distracted by the attempt to attain a variety of knowledge; for it is well known, that the constant and sole exercise of a single faculty gives it a great perfection.

The great uniformity of style in these poems has been considered as strong internal evidence that they were the production of an individual genius; the same epithets and similes prevail throughout. Interpolation may have occurred, but not sufficiently to affect the authority of the whole. Pindar, and other early poets, speak of Homer as one man, as do also the historians Herodotus and Thucydides.

It has, indeed, been maintained by some, that the Odyssey is the work of a different poet, because the images and descriptions evidently belong to a later period than those of the Iliad; and from allusions made to the arts it appears that they must have made a greater progress than could reasonably have taken place during the life of one man, even granting the supposition that the Iliad was the work of Homer's youth, and the Odyssey that of his maturer years. This is probably one of the most forcible objections which has been urged against the belief that the Iliad and the Odyssey are the work of one poet. As is often the case, however, in these doubtful questions, where direct evidence cannot possibly be obtained, much may be said on both sides; and the matter must probably ever remain a subject of curious literary speculation.

The following ancient literary fraud was investigated and exposed by the extraordinary learning and diligence of Dr. Bentley, who, in the year 1697, commenced the famous controversy about the epistles of Phalaris, and the fables of Æsop.

Sir William Temple, in comparing the intellectual pretensions of the ancients and moderns, declared for the ancients, and fortified his judgments by alleging, that the epistles of Phalaris, and the fables of Æsop, were proofs that the older parts of literature were the best; though, even at that time, these works had been challenged as forgeries. The Honourable Charles Boyle at this period having resolved to undertake an edition of the Epistles of Phalaris, as an academic exercise, Wotton, who was preparing a second edition of his work on "Ancient and Modern Learning," requested Dr. Bentley to write a paper, to expose the spurious pretensions of Phalaris and Æsop. This paper met with violent opposition from Mr. Boyle, which determined Dr. Bentley to set about the refutation in good earnest. It will be impossible, within the narrow limits of this sketch, to follow the learned criticism, discussion, and wordy war, between Mr. Boyle and Dr. Bentley, in proof of, and against, the authenticity of the above epistles. It must be sufficient to state that Dr. Bentley's arguments rest upon many grammatical niceties and anachronisms, and on the use of certain Doric and Attic dialects, which came into use later than the supposed period of their composition. His arguments, all supported by immmerable quotations, which form an immense mass of evidence, have not failed to convince most persons of his profound erudition, as well as of the justness of his opinion.

It may be worth while, in this place, to mention a

doubt, that has been promulgated by some modern critics, whether the Anabasis, or retreat of the ten thousand Greeks, is really the work of Xenophon, to whom it has most generally been attributed; or, whether it is the composition of one Themistogenes. In Xenophon's Annals of Grecian History, instead of giving any account of the expedition of Cyrus, and the return of the army, he refers the reader to the account which he ascribes to Themistogenes of Syracuse. Such an account might then possibly be extant, though the mention by Xenophon is the sole evidence that it was so; but it by no means follows that the Anabasis itself was written by Themistogenes; and, from the age of Xenophon to that of Suidas, no mention of such an author occurs in any remaining work, nor was any doubt expressed as to Xenophon being the author of the Anabasis, till Suidas thought proper to controvert the generally received opinion.

The problem is well solved by Mr. Mitford. "Why then, it will of course occur to ask," says he, "did Xenophon, in his Grecian Annals, refer to the work of Themistogenes? Plutarch, in his treatise on the Glory of the Athenians, has accounted for it thus: 'Xenophon,' he says, 'was a subject of history for himself. But when he published his narrative of his own achievements in military command, he ascribed it to Themistogenes of Syracuse; giving away thus the literary reputation to arise from the work, that he might the better establish the credit of the facts related.'

"This explanation, though I give it credit as far as it goes, is, however, not by itself completely satisfactory. Nevertheless, I think every reader of the Anabasis, attending, at the same time, to the general history of the age, may draw, from the two, what is

wanting to complete it. He cannot fail to observe, that it has been a principal purpose of the author of the Anabasis to apologise for the conduct of Xenophon. In the latter part of the work, the narrative is constantly accompanied with a studied defence of his conduct; in which, both the circumstances that produced his banishment from Athens, and whatever might give umbrage or excite jealousy against him at Lacedæmon, have been carefully considered. But there are passages in the work, speeches of Xenophon himself on delicate occasions, particularly his communication with Cleander, the Lacedæmonian general, related in the sixth book, which could be known only from himself or from Cleander. That these have not been forgeries of Themistogenes, is evident from the testimony of Xenophon himself, who refers to the work, which he ascribes to Themistogenes, with entire satisfaction.

"One, then, of these three conclusions must follow: either, first, the narrative of Themistogenes, if such ever existed, had not in it that apology for Xenophon, which we find interwoven in the Anabasis transmitted to us as Xenophon's, and consequently was a different work; or, secondly, Themistogenes wrote under the direction of Xenophon; or, thirdly, Xenophon wrote the extant Anabasis, and, for reasons, which those acquainted with the circumstances of his life, and the history of the times, will have no difficulty to conceive may have been powerful, chose that, on its first publication, it should pass by another's name. The latter has been the belief of all antiquity; and indeed, if it had not been fully known that the ascription of the Anabasis to Themistogenes was a fiction, the concurrence of all antiquity in stripping that author of his just fame, so completely that, from Xenophon himself

to Suidas, he is never once named as an author of merit in any work remaining to us, while, in so many, the Anabasis is mentioned as the work of Xenophon, would be, if at all credible, certainly the most extraordinary circumstance in the history of letters."

A fraud, which perhaps occasioned the greatest regret that ever was felt in the literary world, has been attributed to Peter Aleyonius, one of the learned Italians who cultivated literature in the sixteenth century. He had considerable knowledge of the Greek and Latin tongues, and wrote rhetorical treatises. He was a long time corrector of the press at Venice, in the house of Aldus Manutius, and ought to participate in the praises given to that eminent printer and classical scholar. He translated some treatises of Aristotle into Latin; but the execution of them was so severely criticised by Sepulveda, that Aleyonius, at a great expense, bought up the criticisms of his Spanish enemy to burn them. Paul Jovius says of him, in his quaint language, that he was a man of downright plebeian and sordid manners, and such a slave to his appetite, that in one and the same day he would dine three or four times, but always at the expense of another; nor was he altogether so bad a physician in this beastly practice, since, before he went to bed, he discharged the intemperate load from his stomach.

Aleyonius published a treatise, "De Exilio," containing many fine passages; so elegant in fact was it, that he was accused of having tacked several parts of Cicero "De Gloria" to his own composition, and then, to prevent being convicted of the theft, thrown the manuscript of Cicero, which was the only one in the world, into the fire. Cicero, in his twenty-seventh epistle, fifteenth book, writing to Atticus, says, "I will speedily send you my book, 'De Gloria.'" That

the manuscript was extant till nearly the period in question would seem to be indubitable, as it was enumerated by Bernard Giustiniani, the learned governor of Padua, among the works which he possessed. Along with the rest of his library, it is said to have been bequeathed to a convent of nuns, but from that time it could never be found. It was believed by many, that Peter Alcyonius, who was physician to the monastery, and to whom the nuns entrusted the management of the library, having copied into his own treatise all that suited his purpose, from that of Cicero, had secretly made away with it. This charge was first brought against Alcyonius by Paul Manutius, and was repeated by Paul Jovius, and subsequently by other writers; but Tiraboschi seems to have demonstrated that it is a calumny. It is probable that it was provoked by the excessive vanity and propensity to sarcasm and satire which distinguished Alcyonius.

When the Utopia of Sir Thomas More was first published, it occasioned a pleasant mistake. This political romance represents a perfect but visionary republic, in an island supposed to have been recently discovered in America. "As this was the age of discovery (says Granger), the learned Budæus, and others, took it for a genuine history, and considered it highly expedient that missionaries should be sent thither, in order to convert so wise a nation to Christianity."

No literary performance has ever been the occasion of more discussion or dispute, as to its authenticity, than one which was published by the royalist party to excite the public pity for Charles I. On the day after that monarch's execution appeared a volume, called Icon Basilike, or the Portraiture of his Sacred Majesty, in his Solitude and Sufferings. It professed

to be from the pen of Charles himself, and a faithful exposition of his own thoughts on the principal events of his reign, accompanied with such pious effusions as the recollection suggested to his mind.

It was calculated to create a strong sensation in favour of the royal sufferer, and is said to have passed through fifty editions in the course of the first year.

During the Commonwealth, Milton made an attempt to disprove the king's claim to the composition of the book, but his arguments were by no means conclusive, as the subsequent publications on the same subject proved. After the Restoration, Dr. Gauden, a clergyman of Boeking in Essex, came forward, and declared himself the real author; but he advanced his pretensions with secrecy, and received as the price of his silence, first, the bishopric of Exeter, and subsequently, when he complained of the poverty of that see, the richer one of Worcester.

After his death, these circumstances transpired, and became the subject of an interesting controversy between his friends, and the admirers of Charles the First. The subsequent publication of the Clarendon papers, has, in the opinion of Dr. Lingard, firmly established Gauden's claim; but Dr. Wordsworth, in the year 1824, adjudged it to the king, in his work called "Who wrote Eikon Basilike?" In this, he learnedly combats the opinions of all the late controversialists on that subject. This drew forth replies from the Reverend Henry Todd, and "additional reasons" from the Reverend Mr. Broughton, in favour of Gauden's claim.

Dr. Wordsworth, in a "postscript," again answered his antagonists, and summed up the evidence by saying, that not any convincing arguments in favour of Gauden's claim had been brought forward against his

—Dr. Wordsworth's—but which, by negative evidence, rather strengthened his side of the question.

In a short abstract or analysis of so voluminous a subject it can only be stated, that it seems hardly credible, that Gauden *could* have proposed to write or could have completed, the Icon, labouring under the disadvantages he did. He was not a royal chaplain, nor appears to have been much connected with the court; nor ever to have had intercourse with the king, but once, when he preached before him; yet, in a sudden fit of zeal, he took upon himself the composition of a series of reflections in the name of the king, on the events of the last seven years of his reign; and that without even any communication being made to the royal party; or any suggestion received from them that it would be acceptable; whilst any discovery made by the opposite party would be followed by his certain ruin.

The evidence found in the book itself seems of a nature to disprove its being composed on the spur of the moment, or during the last act of the fatal drama, three fourths of it being devoted to events having no near connexion with the emergency of the time; in fact, only the last six chapters treat of those subjects which were likely to have occupied the public attention at that period.

The tone of observation in general is such as, judging from his other works, it does not appear probable Gauden would have ventured to indulge in; habitual caution being visible in his other political writings. His fraudulent claim for remuneration after royalty was restored, being recompensed by a moderate promotion, does not, of necessity, prove its justice; as many reasons concurred, why the royal party should wish to hush up any reports that might tend to reflect

upon the late king's memory; nor at that time could the fact be susceptible of actual proof.

These several circumstances, in Dr. Wordsworth's opinion, make it more than probable that Gauden's claim was, in reality, what so many other learned persons have concurred in supposing, a literary imposture, which at the time met with undeserved success.

Literary imposture, in our own times, appears to have flourished most from the middle to the latter end of the eighteenth century; for, within forty years of that period, various very remarkable frauds in the commonwealth of letters were ushered into day, and the attention of the public was solicited to them, with all the boldness that a perfect conviction of their real worth and genuine authenticity, on the part of those who promulgated them, could possibly have inspired.

The first of these, in point of time, and intensity of malignant and selfish audacity, was the unpardonable attack made, about the year 1750, by a Mr. Lauder, on the poetical character and moral candour of Milton.

The first regular notice the public received of his intention was from the following circular, which developed his plan of attack:

"I have ventured to publish the following observations on Milton's imitation of the moderns; having lately fallen on four or five modern authors in Latin verse, which I have reason to believe Milton had consulted in composing his Paradise Lost. The novelty of the subject will entitle me to the favour of the reader, since I in no way intend unjustly to derogate from the real merit of the writer. The first author alluded to was Jacobus Masenius. He was a professor of rhetoric, in the Jesuits' College, at Cologne, about 1650, and he wrote 'Sarcotis,' in

five books; 'which,' said he, in the preface, 'is not so much a complete model, as a rough draught of an epic poem.' Milton follows this author tolerably closely through the first two books. In it Adam and Eve are described under the single name of Sarcothea, or human nature, whose antagonist, the infernal serpent, is called Lucifer. The infernal council, or Pandemonium, Lucifer's habits, and the fight of the angels, are too obvious not to have been noticed; Milton's exordium appears to have been almost directly taken from Masenius and Ramsay." Lauder goes on to state that the Paradise Lost was taken from a farce, called Adamo Perso, and from an Italian tragedy, called Paradiso Perso; and that even Milton's poem itself was said to have been written for a tragedy.

"Having procured," continues he, "the Adamus Exul of Grotius*, I found, or imagined myself to find, the first draught, the *prima stamina*, of this wonder-

* This learned man, embracing and supporting the doctrines of Arminius, was doomed, among other divines, at the national synod of Dort, in 1618, to perpetual imprisonment in the castle of Louvestein. Grotius found consolation in literary occupation; and, though his confinement was rigorous, he derived every comfort from the attentions of his wife, who after some difficulty was allowed to visit him. The fond care of this woman at last procured his deliverance, after a captivity of two years; for, on pretence of removing his books, which she declared had proved injurious to his health, she was permitted to send away a chest, three feet and a half long, in which he had concealed himself, and was thus carried by two soldiers from the fortress. It is curious that their suspicions should not have been excited; for, whilst carrying the chest, they complained one to the other of the weight, saying jestingly, that it was as heavy as if an Arminian had been in it. From Louvestein the chest was carried to Gorcum, to the house of a friend, where the learned prisoner was set at liberty, and he immediately escaped from thence to Antwerp, disguised as a mason with a rule and trowel.

ful poem; and I was then induced to search for the collateral relations it might be supposed to have contracted in its progress to maturity." The Adamus Exul of Grotius was never printed with his other works, though it passed through four editions; and it was by very great labour that Mr. Lauder was at last able to get a copy from Gronovius, at Leyden. Milton is charged with having literally translated, rather than barely alluded to, this work.

The severe affliction which Milton endured, in the loss of sight, obliged him to have recourse to filial aid, in consulting such authors as he had occasion to refer to; and Lauder, wishing to prove that he feared detection and exposure, asserted that he taught his daughters only to *read* the several languages in which his authorities were written, confining them to the knowledge of words and pronunciation, but keeping the sense and meaning to himself.

Apparently feeling a momentary shame at his conduct, Lauder, in a kind of apology, added, "As I am sensible this will be deemed most outrageous usage of the divine, immortal Milton, the prince of English poets, and the incomparable author of Paradise Lost, I take this opportunity to declare, that a *strict regard to truth alone**,—and to do justice to those authors from whom Milton has so liberally gleaned, without acknowledgment,—have induced me to make this

* This lover of truth, at the commencement of his pamphlet, with consummate assurance thus proposes himself as a private tutor; "Gentlemen who are desirous *to secure* their children from ill example, by a domestic education, or are themselves inclined to gain or retrieve the knowledge of the Latin tongue, may be waited on at their houses, by the author of the following essay, upon the receipt of a letter directed to the publisher or author.—N.B. Mr. Lauder's abilities, and industry in his profession, can be well attested by persons of the first rank in literature in this metropolis."

attack upon the reputation and memory of a person hitherto so universally applauded and admired for his incomparable poetical abilities."

Dr. Douglas, to whom the world is indebted for investigating and detecting Lauder's baseness, vindicated Milton from the injustice of the charge, in an answer full of diligent research of those authors who were said to have furnished Milton with materials for his poem.

Dr. Douglas commences by saying, "Our Zoilus charges Milton with having borrowed both the plan of his poem, and also particular passages, from other authors. Should these charges even prove true, will it follow that his pretensions to genius are disproved? The same charge might be brought against Virgil; as there is scarcely a passage in his Æneid but is taken from the Iliad or Odyssey. There is no shadow of truth in the assertion made by Lauder, that infinite tribute of veneration had been paid to Milton, through men's ignorance of his having been indebted to the assistance of other authors, when, on the contrary, those very persons who gave him the greatest praise were the principal discoverers of many of his imitations.

"It did not enter my head," continues Dr. Douglas, "that our critic could have the assurance to urge false quotations in support of his charge; and therefore did I, and, as I imagine, did every other person believe, that the authors he quoted really contained those lines which he attributed to them, and which bear so striking a resemblance to passages in Paradise Lost, that the reader cannot avoid concluding, with Lauder, that Milton had really seen and imitated them. Will it not, therefore, be thought extraordinarily strange, and excite the utmost indignation in every candid person's breast, if the reverse of all

this shall appear to be the case; if it can be clearly proved that our candid conscientious critic, whose notions of morality taught him to accuse Milton of the want of common probity or honour for having boasted that he sung things yet unattempted in prose or rhyme, has, in order to make good his charge against Milton, had recourse to forgeries, perhaps the grossest that ever were obtruded on the world?"

It first occurred to Dr. Douglas to search for those authors, from whom Lauder asserted that Milton had borrowed his ideas. Many were scarce, and not to be found; but he succeeded in getting one, Staphorstius, a Dutch poet and divine, who, says Lauder, "never dreamt the prince of English poets would condescend to plume himself so liberally with his—Staphorstius'—feathers;" and he quotes certain passages in proof of this assertion,—an entire quotation of thirty-two lines, besides shorter ones. "I was," says Dr. Douglas, "at a loss where to turn for these lines; for it is remarkable, that through his whole work, Lauder omits to tell his readers where the quotations are to be found: with great labour, however, I found some allusion to the subject, and also, with great surprise, discovered that eight lines quoted as from Staphorstius have no existence in that author; and which eight lines are in Lauder's essay printed in Italics, as having the strongest resemblance to those in Paradise Lost, and it will be impossible for Lauder to clear himself from the charge of having corrupted the text of Staphorstius, by interpolating the eight lines not to be found there. A more curious circumstance still is, that this interpolated passage is taken from a Latin translation of Paradise Lost itself, made by one Hogæus, or Hog, printed in the year 1690, without the variation of a single word: it must be thought therefore

extremely hard that Milton should be run down as a plagiarist for having stolen from himself, yet this is strictly the case. Hog translated the Paradise Lost into Latin: Lauder interpolates some of Hog's lines in Staphorstius, and then urges these very lines as a demonstration that Milton copied him. There is equal testimony to prove that Lauder interpolated Phineas Fletcher, and others, in the same way; but the most extraordinary part of the forgery is yet to be mentioned: this interpolating critic has even forged Milton himself, and interpolates the Paradise Lost, however ridiculously improbable this may seem. In 1747, Lauder makes his first appearance as the Zoilus of Milton, in the Gentleman's Magazine, where, to prove that Milton had copied from the Adamus Exul of Grotius, he quotes, professedly from the Paradise Lost, one line and a half, beginning

> 'And lakes of living sulphur ever flow,
> And ample spaces.'

"After the most careful search, I can safely pronounce that the above line and a half have no existence in the Paradise Lost."

From the difficulty of rebutting Lauder's evidence against Milton, he had acquired some merit in the eyes of men of learning, which procured him the countenance of the great, and encouraged him to open a subscription for the publication of a new edition of those authors who, according to him, had held the torch to Milton.

Upon the publication of Dr. Douglas's remarks on Lauder, the booksellers, who had undertaken his work, thought proper to prefix the following notice to each copy of it:—

"After ten months' insolent triumph, the Rev. Dr. Douglas has favoured the world with a detection of

this scene of villany, and has so powerfully urged his proofs, that no hope was left of invalidating them; an immediate application to Lauder was necessary, and a demand, that the books, from whence he had taken the principal controverted passages, should be put into our hands. He then with great confidence acknowledged the interpolation, and seemed to wonder at the folly of the world, for making such an extraordinary rout about eighteen or twenty lines. As this man has been guilty of such a wicked imposition on us and the public, and is capable of so daring an avowal of it, we declare that we will have no further intercourse with him, and we now sell his book, only as a curiosity of fraud and interpolation, which all the ages of literature cannot parallel.

"JOHN PAYNE,
"JOSEPH BOUSUET."

In a letter addressed to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lauder says, "I own the charge of Dr. Douglas to be just, and I humbly profess my sorrow, but I cannot forbear to take notice, that my interpolating these authors proceeded rather from my being hurried away by violent passions, and rash imprudence, without duly weighing the case, and chiefly from a fatal anxiety not to fall short of my proof in that arduous undertaking; excusing myself on the score, that Pope's criticisms had spoilt the sale of my edition of Dr. Anthony Johnston's elegant paraphrase of the Psalms in Latin verse: and I bethought me of this only way left of enhancing his merit by lessening that of Milton, even as Pope had endeavoured to raise Milton by lessening Johnston's; and I thought, if I could strip Milton of his chief merit, fertility and sublimity of thought, I should at once retrieve Johnston's honour, and convict Pope of pronouncing so

erroneous a judgment, in giving so vast a preference to Milton above Johnston: a task in every way arduous and unpopular, had not necessity in a manner compelled me, as the author whom I highly value, and on whose reputation my subsistence in life, in a great measure, depended, was lately discredited by Pope, both in North and South Britain, in his Dunciad; and in consequence of those remarks, the sale of my edition of Johnston fell considerably, and was thought nothing of."

Lauder wrote also to Dr. Douglas in the following curious strain:—"I resolved to attack Milton's fame, and found some passages which gave me hopes of stigmatising him as a plagiarist; the further I carried my researches, the more eager I grew for the discovery; the more my hypothesis was opposed, the more was I heated with rage*."

Lauder had been sanguine in his hopes that the unreserved confession would atone for his guilt, and that his subscription for a new edition of "Sarcotis," and "Adamus Exul," would meet with the same encouragement as at first; but the anxiety of the public to see them was at an end, and the design of reprinting them met with little or no success. Thus, grown desperate by disappointment, with equal inconsistency and impudence he renewed his attack upon the author of Paradise Lost, and then gave the world, as a reason which excited him to continue his forgeries, that Milton had attacked the character of Charles the

* "Dr. Johnson, who had been so far imposed upon by Lauder, as to furnish a preface and postscript to his work, now dictated a letter for him, addressed to Dr. Douglas, acknowledging his fraud in terms of suitable contrition. This extraordinary attempt of Lauder's was no sudden effort; he had brooded over it for years, and it is uncertain what his principal motive was."—Boswell's Life of Johnson.

First; by saying, that that king had interpolated Pamela's prayer from the Areadia, in the Icon Basilike. He also scrupled not to abuse most unjustifiably Dr. Douglas, as the first exposer of his own forgery.

Lauder afterwards went to Barbadoes, and died there in great poverty in the year 1770.

Early in the eighteenth century (1704) there was published, in London, a history of the island of Formosa, off the coast of China, accompanied by an extraordinary narrative of the author, who went under the name of George Psalmanazar, and who, from the idolatries of his own country, represented himself to have become a convert to Christianity.

The description of Formosa was given with such apparent fidelity, the manners and customs were illustrated with so many engravings of the houses, modes of travelling, and shipping, and specimens of the language and written character so philologically explained, that, though some few persons of superior penetration looked upon the work as an imposture, the belief was almost general of the truth of the history, which was considered the more interesting, as the country described in the volume had hitherto been so imperfectly known. There appeared subsequently, by the same author, "A Dialogue between a Japanese and Formosan," about some points of the religion of the times.

Psalmanazar was much noticed, and his ingenuity had several ordeals to undergo, from the severe examinations and investigations which the curiosity of his supporters, and the suspicion of his adversaries, prompted them to make. He had actually invented a Formosan language and grammar, into which he translated several prayers and short sentences; also a vocabulary for the benefit of those who should visit that island. With this, *his native language*, he was

naturally supposed to be familiar, and he must have had an extraordinary and tenacious memory, not to have laid himself open to more suspicion, in the several repetitions of his examinations, which were taken down for the satisfaction of others: he at last, however, confessed that the whole was a forgery from beginning to end.

He was a man of very great general knowledge, together with natural talent, and appears by his will to have deeply regretted this imposture. His will thus commences: "The last will and testament of me, a poor simple and worthless creature, commonly known by the assumed name of George Psalmanazar." After a devout prayer to the Supreme Being, and directing that he may be buried in the humblest manner, he says, "The principal manuscript that I felt myself bound to leave behind was a faithful narrative of my education, and sallies of my wretched youthful years, and the various ways by which I was, in some measure unadvisedly, led into the base and shameful imposture of passing upon the world for a native of Formosa, and a convert to Christianity, and backing it with a fictitious account of that island, and of my own travels, conversion, &c., all or most part of it hatched in my own brain, without regard to truth or honesty. It is true I have long since disclaimed even publicly all but the shame and guilt of that vile imposition; yet as long as I knew there were still two editions of that scandalous romance remaining in England, besides the several versions it had abroad, I thought it incumbent upon me to undeceive the world, by unravelling that whole mystery of iniquity in a posthumous work." He concludes by once more thus branding his work—"It was no other than a mere forgery of my own devising, a scandalous imposition on the public, and such as I

think myself bound to beg God and the world pardon for writing, and have been long since, as I am to this day, and shall be as long as I live, heartily sorry for, and ashamed of." This document bears date in 1752, when he was in the 73rd year of his age.

In the posthumous memoirs, above alluded to, he studiously concealed who he really was. It appears, however, that he was born, about 1679, in the south of France, either in Provence or Languedoc; and having been guilty of some great excesses in the university where he was receiving his education,—though he does not explain the nature of them,—he found it necessary to take to flight, and wandered clandestinely through a great part of Europe. Finding it both troublesome and hazardous to preserve his incognito as a European, he determined on the plan of imposture which ultimately led him to write his fictitious history of the Island of Formosa. The latter part of his life was spent in the practice of the most unfeigned piety. He supported himself by his literary labours, and was the author of a considerable portion of the Ancient Universal History. His death took place in 1763.

About the year 1760, much speculation was excited in the literary world by the publication of a series of poems purporting to have been translated, by a Mr. Macpherson, from the original Gaelic of the famous poet Ossian, whose compositions had been handed down from his own times by oral tradition. The occasion of Mr. Macpherson's giving them to the world was as follows:—Mr. Home, author of "Douglas," in company with other gentlemen, being at Moffat in the summer of 1759, met there Mr. Macpherson, then tutor to Mr. Graham; and from him they heard some specimens of Gaelic poetry, which so much pleased them, that they begged Mr. Macpherson to publish

them in a small volume. He complied, and this specimen having attracted a good deal of attention, he proposed to make a tour, by subscription, through the Highlands, for the purpose of collecting more complete specimens of the ancient poetry. This journey he performed in 1760, and speedily published the poems in a more complete form. They were received, however, by many with suspicion; it being thought, from the remoteness of the period at which they were said to have been produced, that they could not be genuine.

In 1763, Dr. Hugh Blair wrote a dissertation on the poems of Ossian. This he sent to his friend David Hume, and requested to have his opinion as to the authenticity of the poems. In reply, Hume said, that he never heard the dissertation mentioned, where some one or other did not express his doubt with regard to the antiquity of the poems which were the subject of it; and that he often heard them totally rejected with disdain and indignation, as a palpable and impudent forgery.

The absurd pride and consequence of Macpherson, scorning, as he pretended, to satisfy anybody that doubted his veracity, tended much to confirm the general scepticism: and, added Hume, "if the poems are of genuine origin, they are in all respects the greatest curiosities that were ever discovered in the history of literature."

The first regular attack on the authenticity of Ossian's poems was made, in 1781, by Mr. Shaw, the author of a Gaelic Dictionary and Grammar; and it was a vigorous one. He contended, from internal evidence, that the poems were forgeries; he asserted that many of the Highland persons who had vouched for their genuineness had never seen a line of the

supposed originals, and that Macpherson himself had constantly evaded showing them to him; and he maintained, that both the fable and the machinery of the principal poems were Irish; and that if, as a blind, any manuscripts had ever been shown, they must have been in the Irish language, the Earse dialect of the Gaelic never having been written or printed till, in 1754, Mr. Macfarlane printed a translation of Baxter's "Call to the Unconverted." An answer was attempted by Mr. Clarke, a member of the Scottish Antiquarian Society; but, though he succeeded in some points, he failed in his principal object.

After a lapse of nearly twenty years, a more powerful antagonist of Ossian took the field. This was Mr. Malcolm Laing, author of a History of Scotland. To that history he added an elaborate dissertation, in which he skilfully investigated the claim of the poems to antiquity. The principal grounds on which he decided against it were, the many false and inaccurate allusions to the history of Britain while the country was under the dominion of the Romans; the flagrant difference between Highland manners as described in the poems and by historians; the many palpable imitations from the classics and the Scriptures; the fact that all the Highland traditionary poems yet known referred to the ninth and tenth centuries, and that there existed no Gaelic manuscript older than the fifteenth century; the resemblance which the strains of the pretended Ossian bore to "The Highlander," one of Macpherson's acknowledged compositions; and, lastly, certain startling expressions, used in print by Macpherson, which seemed almost to render it certain that he was not the translator, but the author, of the works which he had given to the world under the name of Ossian.

Anxious that the truth should be elicited on a subject so interesting to them as their national poetry, the Highland Society had already, as far back as 1797, appointed a committee to inquire into the nature and authenticity of Ossian's poems. Mr. Laing's Dissertation, of which a second edition was published in 1804, seems to have quickened the movements of the committee. To assist in elucidating the subject, a series of queries was circulated throughout the Highlands and the Scottish islands. The series consists of six articles, of which the first is the most important. "Have you ever heard repeated or sung any of the poems ascribed to Ossian, translated and published by Mr. Macpherson? By whom have you heard them so repeated, and at what time or times? Did you ever commit any of them to writing, or can you remember them so well as to set them down?" The same answer was requested as to any other ancient poems of the same kind; and the committee likewise expressed a wish to obtain as much information as possible "with regard to the traditionary belief of the country concerning the history of Fingal, and his followers, and that of Ossian and his poems."

It was not till 1810 that the society published the result of the inquiry which it had set on foot. The answers to the queries were certainly by no means satisfactory. The Report, which was drawn up by Henry Mackenzie, stated that the committee had directed its inquiry to two points; firstly, what poetry, of what kind, and of what degree of excellence, existed anciently in the Highlands of Scotland, which was generally known by the denomination of Ossianic; and, secondly, how far that collection of such poetry, published by Mr. James Macpherson, is genuine. On the first point the committee spoke

decidedly. It declared its firm conviction that such poetry did exist; that it was common, general, and in great abundance; that it was of a most striking and impressive sort, in a high degree eloquent, tender, and sublime. On the second point, there was a woeful falling-off in confident assertion. "The committee," says the reporter, "is possessed of no documents to show how much of his collection Mr. Macpherson obtained in the form in which he has given it to the world. The poems, and fragments of poems, which the committee has been able to procure, contain, as will appear from the article in the Appendix, No. 15, often the substance, and sometimes almost the literal expression (the *ipsissima verba*) of passages given by Mr. Macpherson, in the poems of which he has published the translations. *But the committee has not been able to obtain one poem the same in title and tenor with the poems published by him. It is inclined to believe that he was in use to supply chasms, and to give connexion, by inserting passages which he did not find, and to add what he conceived to be dignity and delicacy to the original composition, by striking out passages, by softening incidents, by refining the language; in short, by changing what he considered as too simple or rude for a modern ear, and elevating what in his opinion was below the standard of good poetry.* To what degree, however, he exercised these liberties, it is impossible for the committee to determine. The advantages he possessed, which the committee began its inquiries too late to enjoy, of collecting from the oral recitation of a number of persons, now no more, a very great number of the same poems, on the same subjects, and then collating those different copies, or editions, if they may be so called, rejecting what was spurious

or corrupted in one copy, and adopting, from another, something more genuine and excellent in its place, afforded him an opportunity of putting together what might fairly enough be called an original whole, of much more beauty, and with much fewer blemishes, than the committee believe it now possible for any person or combination of persons to obtain."

This Report, published as it was by persons who were anxious to establish the authenticity of the poems, seems decisively to prove that Macpherson was, in fact, the fabricator of the works attributed to Ossian, or, at the least, that he formed a cento from fragments of ballads and tales, blended with interpolations of his own. The controversy was, however, continued for some time longer, and much ink was shed by the believers and infidels; the presumed Gaelic originals were also at length published; but the believers, nevertheless, daily lost ground, the public ceased to take an interest in the dispute, and the question seems now to be finally set to rest.

The Letters of Junius, though not so strictly to be considered as a literary imposture, have yet excited so much attention and speculation, both by their matter and the impenetrable mystery in which they have hitherto been involved, that a brief notice of that which I consider to be the most successful attempt to discover the real author may not here be unacceptable.

Mr. G. Chalmers wrote a dissertation, to prove that the author of the Letters of Junius was a Mr. M'Aulay Boyd; and, certainly, as far as circumstantial evidence goes, short of direct proof, there appears much reason for supposing him not far from the truth in his conjectures.

M'Aulay Boyd was born in April, 1746, at his father's house, Ship Street, Dublin, and in 1761 was

received as a fellow-commoner in the university of that city. He came to London in 1766, to study the law; but his propensities carried him oftener to St. Stephen's than to Westminster Hall, and he exhibited a wonderful retention of memory, by reciting perfectly the speeches of the night to his associates in his club. He became intimate with Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Garrick, and many other members of the Literary Club.

At the time of an election in Antrim, he addressed twelve letters to the independent electors, under the appellation of "The Freeholder," to gain their votes for a constitutional candidate—Wilson; and these letters are known to have contributed to the raising of that wild clamour, which carried Wilson's election by an enthusiastic blast of momentary madness. The style of "The Freeholder" is strongly impregnated with the essence of Junius. A great deal of evidence is adduced in continuation by Chalmers, which seems to bear him out in his conjectures; and it may be briefly recapitulated, that, firstly, the letters of Junius appear to have been written by an Irishman; secondly, that they are the work of an inexperienced or juvenile pen; and if Boyd wrote them, it must have been when he was between his twenty-third and twenty-fifth years; thirdly, they were published by one "who delighted to fish in troubled waters," a propensity which Boyd frequently gratified; fourthly, the author was a constant attendant on both houses of parliament; fifthly, compared with "The Freeholder," Boyd's acknowledged work, there is a wonderful sameness in all the faults and excellences of the two.

Boyd took a particular interest in Junius, and talked as if he knew the author, but that he never would be

generally known: his wife often suspected him to be the writer. He never disclaimed the imputation, or claimed the honour.

The public, says Mr. Chalmers, has an interest in exposing this mystery; and the relatives of those respectable persons who were said to be the writers have also an interest, if it is known where the application could be made, in placing the seditious pen of Junius in the proper hands.

Almon, a bookseller, imagined that he had clearly detected Boyd as the author. In 1769, at a meeting of the booksellers and printers, H. S. Woodfall read a letter from Junius, because it contained a passage relating to the business of the meeting. Almon saw the hand-writing of the manuscript, without disclosing his thoughts to the meeting; but the next time he saw Boyd at his shop, in Piccadilly, Almon said, "I have seen a part of one of Junius's Letters in manuscript, which I believe is your hand-writing." Boyd instantly changed colour, and, after a short pause, replied, "The similitude of hand-writing is not a conclusive fact." Now, Boyd was by nature confident, and by habit a man of the world, a sort of character not apt to blush. From this time Almon used to say that he suspected Junius was a broken-down gentleman without a penny in his pocket.

The anonymous publication of a series of letters was, before this time, had recourse to for a political purpose. About the year 1722, when Charles, Duke of Grafton, was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, William Wood, a hardwareman and bankrupt, alleging the great want of copper money in that kingdom, procured a patent for coining one hundred and eight thousand pounds, to pass there as current money. This measure was thought by some persons to be a vile job

from beginning to end, and that the chief procurers of the patent were to be sharers in the profits. Some anonymous letters were, therefore, written in 1724, under the assumed name of the *Drapier*, or Draper, warning the people not to receive the coin which was then sent over.

The real author of these letters, as afterwards appeared, was the celebrated Dr. Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's, who, indignant at the scheme, boldly withstood the designs of the grasping projector.

Wood's project was, by virtue of a patent fraudulently obtained, to coin halfpence for Ireland, at about eleven parts in twelve under their real value; but which, even if ever so good, no man could have been obliged to receive in any payment whatever.

The first letter convinced all parties in Ireland that the admission of Wood's money would prove fatal to the nation; some passages in the fourth, being thought to reflect upon the people in power, were selected for prosecution, and three hundred pounds offered, as a reward for the discovery of the author; but no clue was ever given by which such discovery could be made. The copies were always sent to the press by some obscure messenger, who never knew the person from whom he received them. The amanuensis alone was trusted, to whom, two years afterwards, the author gave an employment that brought him in forty pounds a-year.

The purpose of the letters was completely answered, Wood was compelled to relinquish his patent, and his halfpence were totally suppressed.

That the letters of "Junius," "The *Drapier*," and other *political* tracts, should have been published anonymously, cannot be considered a very extraordinary caution on the part of the authors; though

the public are always anxious to know the writers of such pamphlets as have been cleverly executed. But many authors of works purely literary, and which, after a perusal by the public, have been deservedly praised, have for a time kept themselves studiously concealed, as if unwilling to receive any public tribute of admiration; or, perhaps, amused by the variety of speculations afloat concerning them.

Dean Swift, at first, published his "Tale of a Tub," anonymously; it speedily excited very considerable attention, some applauding, others reprobating its tendency and design. Fourteen years after this, "Gulliver's Travels" appeared, which acquired a still more extended popularity. Even Swift's most intimate friends were unacquainted with its origin; though many suspected who the author was. Gay wrote to him, saying, "About ten days ago, a book was published here of the travels of one Gulliver, which has been the conversation of the whole town ever since: the whole impression sold in a week, and nothing is more diverting than to hear the different opinions people give of it; though all agree in liking it extremely. It is usually said you are the author; but, I am told, the bookseller declares he knows not from what hand it came."

In the summer of 1814, there appeared, anonymously, a novel, bearing the title of "Waverley." It was written in a fascinating style, and was read with avidity by every one. It was speedily followed by other historical novels, as interesting, or more so, from the pen of "the Author of Waverley." They succeeded each other with such prolific and astonishing rapidity, and were executed in such a masterly manner, that, at last, the curiosity of the public became extreme, to discover to whom they were in-

debted for them. Pamphlets on the subject, and speculations in periodicals, were abundant. Various persons were named; but the majority leaned to the opinion that Sir Walter Scott was the writer. It was not, however, till many years afterwards, that circumstances arising out of the bankruptcy of his publishers, compelled him to throw aside the veil, and to stand forth the avowed author of productions which have spread his fame to the farthest limits of civilised society, and which can never cease to retain a strong hold upon the human mind.

From this brief notice of one extraordinary genius, who lived long to enjoy his fame, we must go back, nearly half a century, to make mention of another, who perished, unpraised and unfriended, before he reached the age of manhood. In the annals of literature there is no example recorded of precocious talent which can vie with that of Thomas Chatterton. He was born at Bristol, in St. Mary Redcliffe parish, on the 20th of November, 1752, and was the posthumous son of an individual who had been successively writing-master to a classical school, singing-man in Bristol Cathedral, and master of the Pyle-street Free-school. At the age of five years, he was apparently so stupid as to be deemed incapable of learning his letters. It was not till his latent powers were roused, by being shown the illuminated capitals of an old French manuscript, that he became anxious to acquire learning. Henceforth he needed no stimulant. Before he was eight years old, he was admitted into Colson's school, the Christ's Hospital of Bristol, where he read much in his intervals of leisure, and began to try his poetical skill. When he was somewhat under fifteen, he was apprenticed to Mr. Lambert, an attorney. It was while he was in this situa-

tion, and early in October, 1768, when the new bridge at Bristol was completed, that he gave to the world the first article of that series of literary forgeries which has immortalised him. It was sent to Farley's Bristol Journal, and was called "a description of the Friars first passing over the old bridge: taken from an ancient manuscript." He subsequently, from time to time, produced various poems of pre-eminent beauty, clothed in antique language. The language, however, was not that of any one period; nor was the style, nor in many instances the form of composition, that of the fifteenth century, the age to which he assigned them. He pretended that they were written by Thomas Rowley, a priest, and Thomas Canynge, and that they were copied from parchments, which his father had found in a large box, in a room over the chapel on the north side of Redcliffe church. While he was engaged in composing these poems, he was also a liberal contributor of prose and verse to the Magazines. Having, in his moody moments, avowed an intention of committing suicide, his master released him from his indentures, and Chatterton repaired to London, where he resolved to depend upon his pen for subsistence. At the outset, his hopes were raised to a high pitch; but they were soon blighted. In spite of his wonderful fertility, and his persevering exertions, he seems to have been unable to provide for the day that was passing over him. Privations and wounded pride drove him to despair, and, on the 25th of August, 1770, he put an end to his existence by poison. Editions of the pretended poems of Rowley were published by Mr. Tyrwhit and Dean Milles; and a controversy was long and vehemently maintained on the question of their antiquity. There are now few persons who doubt that they are the work of

Chatterton. That he was capable of producing them is sufficiently proved by his acknowledged poems.

We come now to a much more daring forgery, perpetrated by an individual whose talents were far inferior to those of Chatterton. Mr. Malone, in the preface to his edition of Shakspeare, had shown that Shakspeare died at the age of fifty-two, in April 1616, leaving his daughter, and her husband, Dr. J. Hall, executors. The will demonstrates, that he died possessed of "baubles, gewgaws, and toys to mock apes, &c." Dr. Hall died in 1635, leaving a will, and bequeathing his library and manuscripts to J. Nash. "Here," says Mr. Malone, "is a proof that the executor of Shakspeare's will left a library and manuscripts behind him." In a satisfactory manner did Mr. Malone trace down, from the public records, the legal transmission of the personal property of Shakspeare's descendants to a recent period, from which he inferred, that, amongst the present generation of them, fragments might be found, if curiosity would prompt diligence to search the repositories of concealment. The search proved successful, and from the appearance of the manuscripts of Shakspeare in 1790, every moment was expectancy of more arrivals; in fact discovery succeeded discovery so fast, that Mr. Malone obtained documents enough to fill a folio. A painting of Shakspeare was also found, the very painting that enabled Droeshout to engrave the effigies of Shakspeare which was prefixed to the folio edition of his dramas, and of which Ben Jonson affirmed that

> "The Graver had a strife
> With nature, to outdo the life;"

and everything concurred to evince the genuineness of this ancient painting.

A new discovery of Shakspearian papers was announced for exhibition in Norfolk-street, in 1794, and curiosity was again roused.

Mr. Malone, from some private reasons, seemed indifferent about these papers in Norfolk-street; and he was urged by his scepticism to contradict that probability which he had taught the imaginative world to entertain in favour of the discovery of Shakspearian fragments. Many other learned persons being, however, convinced by examination of the authenticity of these miscellaneous papers, the publication of them was undertaken by subscription, and *four guineas* a copy were freely paid by the subscribers.

When the book came out, and not till then, did Mr. Malone condescend to look at it, and examine its pretensions; and he quickly decided it to be a palpable and bold forgery. This he demonstrated by a learned and critical examination of each particular paper; his inquiry was drawn up in the form of a letter, and addressed to the Right Honourable James, Earl of Charlemont, in the year 1796.

The editor of them, Mr. Ireland, in his preface, had assured the public, that all men of taste who had viewed them previous to publication unanimously testified in favour of their authenticity, and declared that there was on their side a mass of irrefragable evidence, external and internal; that it was impossible, amid such various sources of detection, for the art of imitation to have hazarded itself without being betrayed; and, consequently, that these papers could be no other than the production of Shakspeare himself.

The editor, in continuation, said, that these papers came into his hands from his son, Samuel William Henry Ireland, a young man nineteen years of age, by whom the discovery was accidentally made, at the

house of a gentleman of considerable property, amongst a heterogeneous collection of family papers.

The legal contracts between Shakspeare and others were, it was said, first found by the junior Ireland, and soon afterwards, the deed of gift to William Henry Ireland, described as the friend of Shakspeare, in consequence of his having saved the dramatist's life. In pursuing this research, he was so fortunate as to meet with some deeds very material to the interests of the gentleman at whose house he was staying; and such as established, beyond all doubt, his title to considerable property, of which he was as ignorant as he was of possessing these interesting manuscripts of Shakspeare. In return for this service, the gentleman promised him every paper relative to Shakspeare.

Fully satisfied with the honour and liberality shown to him, the finder of these treasures did not feel justified in importuning or requesting a gentleman, to whom he was known by obligation alone, to subject himself to the impertinence and licentiousness of literary curiosity and cavil, unless he should voluntarily come forward. He had applied to the original possessor of them for his permission to print them, and only obtained it under the strongest injunctions of secrecy.

"It is to be observed," says Mr. Malone, "that we are not told where the deed was first discovered; it is said, in a mansion-house, but where situated is not stated. Another very remarkable incident is mentioned; the discoverer met the possessor, to whom he was unknown, at a coffee-house, or some public place, and the conversation turning on old autographs, of which the discoverer was a collector, the country gentleman said to him, 'If you are for autographs, I am your man; come to my chambers, any morning, and

rummage my old deeds, and you will find enough of them.' Accordingly the discoverer goes, and taking down a parcel, in a few minutes lighted on the name of Shakspeare. The discovery of the title to a considerable estate was so fortunate and beneficial a circumstance to this unknown gentleman, that we cannot wonder at his liberality in giving up all his right to these valuable literary curiosities; but one naturally wishes to know in what county this estate lies, or whether any suit has been instituted within the last year or two, in consequence of such a discovery of title-deeds so little dreamt of."

According to Mr. Malone, the great objections, critically speaking, to be brought against the manuscripts are, firstly, the orthography; this is not only not the orthography of Elizabeth or her time, but, for the most part, of no one age whatever. The spelling of the copulative *and*, and the preposition *for*, ande—forre, is unprecedented. "I have," says Mr. Malone, "perused some thousands of deeds and manuscripts, and never once found such a spelling of them; the absurd way in which almost every word is overladen with both vowels and consonants, will strike every reader who has any knowledge on the subject."

Quotations from manuscripts are made by Mr. Malone, from Chaucer downwards to the end of the sixteenth century, showing the progressive changes in the mode of orthography; and they certainly appear to prove, most satisfactorily, that the papers, in which such laboured and capricious deformity of spelling is introduced, are an entire forgery. "For example, the word *masterre*, at that period, was spelt maister. There is not a single authority for Londonne. So early as the time of Edward the First, Robert of Glouecester said,

'And now me clepet it London, that is lighter in the mouth.'

Leycesterre for Leycester is as incorrect.

"Secondly, the phraseology is equally faulty, particularly in the letter, supposed to be written and directed by Queen Elizabeth to William Shakspeare. This letter, in particular, it is very easy to prove a forgery; as, by an anachronism, it is directed to William Shakspeare at the Globe by the Thames. Now the Globe was a theatre which did not open till the year 1594; yet, in the same letter, mention is made of the expected presence of Leicester, who died in September 1588, when this theatre did not exist."

The deeds and miscellaneous papers were exhibited in Norfolk-street, long before their publication, and they were submitted to the critical examination of any one willing to question them; nor, from their appearance of venerable antiquity, was a doubt of their genuine authenticity allowed to be entertained. When the elder Mr. Ireland afterwards published his "Vindication," he showed how readily the most discerning persons yielded their faith to this imposture. Mr. Boaden, he says, thus wrote to G. Steevens after having seen the manuscripts. "In some instances credulity is no disgrace, strong enthusiasm is always eager to believe; I confess that, for some time after I had seen them, I continued to think they might be genuine; they bore the character of the poet's writing, the paper appeared of sufficient age, the water-marks were earnestly displayed, and the matter diligently applauded; I remember that I beheld the papers with the tremor of utmost delight, touched the invaluable relics with reverential respect, and deemed even existence dearer as it gave me so refined a satisfaction."

Similar and even stronger impressions were made

on James Boswell, one of those literary characters who, in company with Dr. Parr, signed a certificate expressing their belief of the authenticity of the papers. Previous to signing his name, Boswell fell on his knees, and, in a tone of enthusiasm and exultation, thanked God that he had lived to witness their discovery, and that he could now die in peace. In proportion to this strong belief, therefore, was the public indignation excited against the inventors of that monstrous—and to the subscribers expensive—forgery, which the critical acumen of Mr. Malone had so clearly exposed. The blame of the transaction was imputed as much to Mr. Ireland, the father, as to William Henry, the son, who was in reality sole contriver of this imposture. In an exculpatory pamphlet he says, "In justice to the memory of my father, I think it necessary to give a true account of the publication of these manuscripts. After dinner my father would read different accounts of Shakspeare, and remark how wonderful it was that no vestige of his signature remains, except that at Doctors' Commons. Curiosity led me to look at the signature, in Steevens' edition of his plays, and it occurred to me, that if some old writing could be produced, and passed off for Shakspeare's, it might occasion a little mirth, and show how far credulity would go in search of antiquities. I first tried an experiment by writing a letter, as from the author of an old book in my possession, in dedication of it to Queen Elizabeth. I showed it to my father, who thought it genuine. This encouraged me to proceed till the whole work was completed, and published with the following title-page: 'Miscellaneous papers and legal instruments under the hand and seal of William Shakspeare, including the tragedy of King Lear, and

a fragment of Hamlet, folio, London, 1796.' And subsequently, 'Free reflections on the miscellaneous papers, etc. in the possession of S. Ireland, to which are added extracts from the Virgin Queen, a play.'"

The story of the country gentleman was told to silence the numerous inquiries as to where they came from. In conclusion, Mr. S. Ireland says, "I most sincerely regret any offence I may have given the world, or particular individuals, trusting at the same time, that they will deem the whole the work of a boy, without any evil or bad intent, but hurried on, thoughtless of any danger that awaited to ensnare him."

The drama of Vortigern, which formed one portion of the forgery, was brought out at Drury-lane theatre, and was unanimously damned.

The art of counterfeiting old deeds and manuscripts has often been had recourse to for the purpose of fraud. Some curious evidence of such practices was given in the case of "Mossam *v.* Dame Theodosia Joy," which may be found at large in the State Trials, vol. vii .p. 571. This lady was proved to have forged the title deeds of an estate to which she laid claim. Sergeant Stringer, in the course of the trial, inquired of Mrs. Duffet, one of the witnesses, "Pray what did they do to the deeds to make them look like ancient true deeds?" The witness replied, "For the making of the outsides look old and dirty, they used to rub them on the windows that were very dusty, and wear them in the pockets, to crease them, for weeks together. According as they intended to make use of them, when they had been rubbed and made to look dirty, and they were to pass for deeds of many years' standing, it was used to lay them in a balcony, or any open place, for the rain to wet them, and the next

clear day they were exposed to the sun, or placed before the fire, to dry them hastily, that they might be shrivelled."

The introduction of the Inquisition into Portugal, has been stated to have resulted from the admirable skill in counterfeiting signatures which was possessed by a monk named Saavedra. About the year 1540, this monk forged apostolic bulls, royal decrees, and bills of exchange, with so much accuracy that they passed for genuine. He also succeeded so well as to pass himself off for a knight commander of the military order of St. Jago, the income of which amounted to three hundred ducats, which he received for a year and a half. In a short time he acquired, by means of the royal deeds which he counterfeited, three hundred and sixty thousand ducats. He might have remained undetected through life, had not his successes tempted him to undertake a still more hazardous fraud, which led to his detection; falling in with a Jesuit travelling to Portugal with an apostolical brief for the foundation of a Jesuit's College, he concerted a plan for introducing the inquisition. Saavedra forged letters from Charles V. to the King of Portugal, and a papal bull for establishing the inquisition there. This bull appointed Saavedra legate. Following up his deception, he assumed the character of a Roman cardinal, and made a visit to Portugal. The king despatched a distinguished nobleman to receive him. Saavedra spent three months at Lisbon, after which he travelled through the kingdom; but he was at last detected by the Inquisitor General of Spain, and was sentenced to the galleys for ten years.

The eighteenth century was closed with a literary fraud, concocted in Germany, to which circumstances gave a temporary success. So little is known of the

interior of Africa, that anything which seems likely to add to our knowledge upon this subject can hardly fail to excite attention. Public curiosity was, therefore, raised to the highest pitch, when a work was announced, with the captivating title of "Travels in the Interior of Africa, from the Cape of Good Hope to Morocco, from the years 1781 to 1797; by Christian Frederick Damberger." Translations of a work which promised to remove the veil that had so long covered central Africa, were immediately undertaken in England and in France; and each translator laboured indefatigably, in the fear of the market being forestalled by his rival. The delusion, however, was quickly dispelled; the work being discovered to be the manufacture of a printer of Wittemberg, by name Zachary Taurinius, who had before tried his skill in forging a Voyage to the East Indies, Egypt, &c., and a Voyage and Journey to Asia, Africa, and America.

A literary imposition similar to that which was practised in England by Chatterton, was effected in France, in 1804. A small volume was published at Paris, edited by M. Vanderbourg, and professing to be the "Poems of Margaret Eleanor Clotilda de Vallon-Chalys, afterwards Madame de Surville, a French poetess of the fifteenth century." They were said to have been discovered, in 1782, among the dusty archives of his family, by a M. de Surville, a descendant of the fair authoress, who had a transcript of them made. The originals were unfortunately destroyed by fire, and M. de Surville lost his life during the French revolution, but the copy of the poems was saved, and, with much difficulty, was procured by the editor. Madame de Surville is represented as having displayed singularly precocious abilities; to have been married in 1421; and to have lived at least to the

age of ninety, exercising her poetical talent to the last. Serious doubts as to the truth of this story are entertained by the literary men of France. But, though the authenticity of these compositions may be disputed, there can be no dispute respecting their merit. There is a grace, sweetness, and spirit, in them, which are exceedingly delightful. From the following translation of the supposed Madame de Surville's "Verses to my First Born," which appeared in an early number of the New Monthly Magazine, some idea may be formed of her poetical talents:

My cherished infant! image of thy sire!
Sleep on the bosom which thy small lip presses;
Sleep, little one, and close those eyes of fire,
Those eyelets which the weight of sleep oppresses.

Sweet friend! dear little one! may slumbers lend thee
Delights which I must never more enjoy!
I watch o'er thee, to nourish and defend thee,
And count these vigils sweet, for thee, my boy.

Sleep, infant, sleep! my solace and my treasure!
Sleep on my breast, the breast which gladly bore thee!
And though thy words can give this heart no pleasure,
It loves to see thy thousand smiles come o'er thee.

Yes, thou wilt smile, young friend, when thou awakest,
Yes, thou wilt smile, to see my joyful guise;
Thy mother's face thou never now mistakest,
And thou hast learned to look into her eyes.

What! do thy little fingers leave the breast,
The fountain which thy small lip pressed at pleasure?
Couldst thou exhaust it, pledge of passion blest,
E'en then thou couldst not know my fond love's measure.

My gentle son! sweet friend, whom I adore!
My infant love! my comfort! my delight!
I gaze on thee, and gazing o'er and o'er,
I blame the quick return of every night.

His little arms stretch forth—sleep o'er him steals—
His eye is closed—he sleeps—how still his breath!
But for the tints his flowery cheek reveals,
He seems to slumber in the arms of death.

Awake my child!—I tremble with affright!—
Awaken!—Fatal thought, thou art no more!—
My child!—one moment gaze upon the light,
And e'en with thy repose my life restore.

Blest error! still he sleeps—I breathe again—
May gentle dreams delight his calm repose!
But when will *he*, for whom I sigh—oh when
Will he, beside me watch thine eyes unclose?

When shall I see *him* who hath given thee life,—
My youthful husband, noblest of his race?
Methinks I see, blest mother, and blest wife!
Thy little hands thy father's neck embrace.

How will he revel in thy first caress,
Disputing with thee for thy gentle kiss!
But think not to engross his tenderness,
Clotilda too shall have her share of bliss.

How will he joy to see his image there;
The sweetness of his large cerulean eye!
His noble forehead, and his graceful air,
Which love himself might view with jealousy.

For me—I am not jealous of his love,
And gladly I divide it, sweet, with thee;
Thou shalt, like him, a faithful husband prove,
But not, like him, give this anxiety.

I speak to thee—thou understand'st me not—
Thou couldst not understand though sleep were fled—
Poor little child! the tangles of his thought,
His infant thought, are not unravelled.

We have been happy infants as *thou* art;
Sad reason will destroy the dream too soon;
Sleep in the calm repose that lulls thy heart,
Ere long its very memory will be gone.

In 1823, a visit to England was made by a singular individual, named Hunter, a native of America, who, though it appears certain that he professed to be what he was not, was undoubtedly a man of considerable abilities. During his stay in this country, he published his own adventures, under the title of "Memoirs of a Captivity among the Indians of North America, from Childhood to the Age of Nineteen; with Anecdotes descriptive of their Manners and Customs." The work contains a highly-interesting narrative of his alleged wanderings with various tribes of the Red Men, and was at first much prized as a faithful picture of Indian life. The society of Hunter was eagerly sought by many eminent literary and philanthropic characters, who were eager to assist him in that which he professed to be his grand object; namely, to devote himself to the civilisation of the red race, in order to avert the destruction which seems to impend over it. After his departure from England, however, strong evidence was brought forward, to demonstrate that his story was, in great part, if not wholly, a fabrication. That Hunter had had some intercourse with the Indians, is not improbable; but the romantic tale which he tells of his peregrinations must henceforth be classed among works of fiction.

In the following year, 1824, the extraordinary popularity which Sir Walter Scott's novels had acquired in Germany, gave occasion to an audacious fraud on the part of some German booksellers. A novel was got up by them, with the title of Walladmor, and was ushered into the world, at the Leipsic fair, as the translation of a new production by Sir Walter. This spurious Simon Pure subsequently made its appearance in an English dress. Though the author must undoubtedly be classed among knaves, it must in jus-

tice be owned, that he was not a fool: there being some parts of his work which are by no means contemptible.

The last instance of literary imposture dates no further back than the year 1832. A M. Douville was the perpetrator, and the title which he gave to it was, "A Journey in Congo and the Interior of Equinoctial Africa." M. Douville had probably visited some of the Portuguese settlements on the coast, but his astonishing discoveries in the interior, must, like the captivity of Hunter, be considered as deserving of equal credence with the travels of Gulliver.

---

## CHAPTER XII.

### MASTERPIECES AND DECEPTIONS IN PAINTING AND SCULPTURE.

Early Practice of Painting and Sculpture—Deception not the purpose of Painting—Deceptive Powers of early Painters: Zeuxis, Parrhasius, Apelles, and Protogenes—Anecdote of Vandyke and Frank Hals—Apelles and the shoemaking Critic—Apelles at Alexandria—Instances of the Skill of Apelles and Parrhasius, and of some modern Artists—Effects of Chance in Painting—Origin of the Corinthian Capital—Origin of Gothic Architecture—Admirable Copy of Raphael by Del Sarto—Imitative Powers of Sebastian Ricci; Speech of La Fosse to him—Ingenious Stratagem of Lord Northwick—Laughable Cheat by Mabuse—Superstitious Stories respecting Pictures—Presentation Picture by Rubens—Juan de Pereja, the Mulatto Slave of Velasquez—Picture-dealing; Tricks of Picture-dealers—Secret of the Venetian Style of Colouring—Anecdote of a Picture Collector—Originals mistaken for Copies—Imitations of Painting—The Polygraphic Society—Mosaic—Mexican Feather Pictures—Stratagem of an Architect—Michael Angelo's Cupid—Statue of Charles I.; of Charles II.

The arts of painting and sculpture appear to have been practised, with more or less skill, from the earliest times, and probably made continual advances

towards excellence from the idolatrous worship of graven images, both "in the likeness of things above, the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth;" but they certainly reached perfection amongst the Greeks and Romans. "Who," says Mr. Shee, in his Elements of Art, "that contemplates the Apollo or the Venus, the Hercules or the Laocoon, the Gladiator or the Antinous, can point out a means of their improvement, or entertain a hope to see them surpassed?" or who, that has Byron's poetical description in his memory, or has had the felicity to .

> "View the Lord of the unerring bow,
> The God of life, and poesy, and light,"

or see

> "Laocoon's torture dignifying pain,"

can cease to regret that the paintings of the same era can now be appreciated only through the pages of history?

A learned professor of the art of painting—Sir Joshua Reynolds—has drawn a distinction between deception, as he terms it, and the more laudable attempts at excellence. "Deception," says he, "which is so often recommended by writers on the theory of painting, instead of advancing the art, in reality carries it back to its infant state: the first essays in painting were certainly nothing more than mere imitations of individual objects, and when these amounted to deception, the artist had accomplished his purpose."

Historical records furnish us with some anecdotes of the deceptive powers of the earliest painters, which prove them to have been possessed of great delicacy and exactness of execution. Parrhasius disputed with Zeuxis the honour of being the best painter in the age in which they lived; and, to decide this

point, they agreed that each should produce a picture, of which the world should judge. Zeuxis accordingly painted some grapes, and Parrhasius a curtain. The work of Zeuxis being exposed, birds came and pecked at it: he being proud of the judgment of the birds, desired Parrhasius to draw his curtain and show his picture; but, finding himself outwitted, ingenuously confessed himself overcome. Zeuxis afterwards painted a boy carrying grapes; and seeing the birds come to it, he confessed that, if the grapes were well done, the boy must be as ill done, since the birds were not afraid of him. Like many others of his profession, he was doubtless an eccentric character; for, it is said, the last picture he painted was that of an old woman, which, when he had finished, he was so pleased with, that he laughed himself to death at her comical figure.

Apelles was one of the most distinguished of the ancient painters, and he sought an intimacy with Protogenes, a painter, who lived retired in the isle of Rhodes, whither Apelles went to see him. When he arrived there, he found only an old woman at the house, who, asking Apelles his name, he answered that he would write it on the canvas; and taking his pencil, with some colour he designed something with great delicacy and then retired. Protogenes coming home shortly after, the old woman told him what had passed. Observing the beauty of the outline, he said it was the work of Apelles, he believing that no one else could do it. Then, with another colour, he drew on the first lines a second outline, more correct and delicate, and went out, bidding his servant show *that* to the person if he returned. Apelles going back, was astonished to see himself outdone; but with a third colour he finished the

design with all the subtilty of his art. Protogenes returning, and seeing this last addition, gave up the dispute, and ran in haste to find Apelles. Pliny says, he saw this fragment before it was consumed at the burning of the emperor's palace, and that there were scarce any lines to be distinguished, yet it was more valuable than any other painting.

An anecdote somewhat similar to this is related of Vandyke, who had so high an opinion of the genius of Frank Hals, that he went to Haerlem, for the sole purpose of visiting him. He introduced himself as a gentleman on his travels, who had but two hours to spare, and wished in that time to have his portrait painted. Hals commenced with all possible celerity; after he had proceeded some time, Vandyke desired to look at his progress, and jokingly observed, that the work seemed so very easy, he thought he could do the same. Then, taking up the palette, he requested Hals to sit down, and painted his portrait in a quarter of an hour. The moment Hals saw it, he exclaimed that no one but Vandyke could have achieved such a wonder, and he embraced him with transport.

Apelles had recourse to an artifice to learn the sentiments of the public respecting his pictures. He exposed them to the general view, and remained behind the canvas, to hear the remarks of the passers by. A shoemaker coming by one day, criticised the sandal of a figure, and it was in consequence altered; but passing on the following day, and proud to see his criticism noticed, he censured the leg, which was not faulty; on which Apelles came from behind, and told him his judgment went no higher than the sandal, whence came the proverb, "Let not the shoemaker go beyond his last."

Another painter, it is said, desirous of putting public criticism to a surer test, exposed his picture with a brush and some paint, and a request that each critic would mark that part of it he thought defective; returning in the evening, he found the original picture obliterated, its place being quite usurped by the various and repeated marks of disapprobation.

Apelles was once wrecked on the coast of Alexandria, where he had formerly been well received; but the then reigning monarch treated him with neglect. The courtiers, who owed Apelles a spite, sent him a fictitious invitation to the king's table, by one of their attendants: it was gladly accepted by Apelles. The king, offended at his presumption, asked him which of his court had invited him. The painter extricated himself like a man of wit; taking a piece of charcoal from a chafing-dish, with three or four strokes on the wall he sketched the person who bore the message to him, to the great astonishment of Ptolemy, who from the first few lines knew the face of the impostor. This adventure reconciled the king to the painter, who was afterwards loaded with honours*.

Another instance of off-hand portrait painting, is that recorded of Luco Giordano, who, painting before the queen of Spain, was asked by her what sort of woman his wife was; when he immediately painted her on the spot, introducing her into the picture he

* Mr. Cruikshank, whose works in illustration of humorous subjects are so well known, lately applied the powers of his pencil to a similar purpose, when appealing to a magistrate for protection against an impostor who assumed his name, and procured subscriptions and contributions to forthcoming works, from strangers newly arrived in the metropolis; for, when asked to describe the person of this man for the information of the police, Mr. Cruikshank instantly sketched his likeness, to the amusement of all present.

was at work upon; this witty reply so pleased the queen, that she gave him a pearl necklace for his wife from her own person.

The most extraordinary graphic power of Apelles's pencil was evinced by the fact related by Appian—*if, indeed, it can be believed*—that a certain physiognomist and fortune-teller, by looking on his portraits, foretold the very time of the death of those persons whom those pictures represented, or at what time their deaths had happened, if they were already dead.

In common also with many other celebrated painters, Apelles so admirably imitated animals as to deceive the species which he represented; in particular, he is said to have so well painted a horse, that when seen by real horses they neighed, snuffed, and kicked at it, to provoke it to fight. Parrhasius also succeeded so well in painting a partridge, that the real birds flew to it.

The more modern artists have followed the example of the ancients with equal success. Barnazano, an excellent painter of landscapes, painted a strawberry so exactly that peacocks snapped at it, supposing it to be natural. Andrea de Mantegna deceived his master with a fly, painted on the brow of a lion. Holbein proposed to quit Basil for a time, to raise the value of his works, which were growing too numerous there; but before he went, he intimated that he should leave a specimen of the power of his abilities. A portrait of one of his patrons was at his house; on the forehead he painted a fly, and sent the picture to the owner of it: the gentleman, struck with the beauty of the piece, went eagerly to brush off the fly, and then found the deceit. The story soon spread, and, as such trifling deceptions often do,

made more impression than greater excellences. Orders were given to prevent the city being deprived of so wonderful an artist, but in the meanwhile Holbein had withdrawn himself privately. A Roman cardinal, it is said, even presented a paper to a portrait of Pope Leo, for him to sign it.

Chance has sometimes effected that which the skill of the artist in vain endeavoured to perform. A lucky hit of this sort is attributed to Protogenes, who had for a long time endeavoured to represent the foam about the mouth of a horse. Getting at last impatient, he threw the sponge with which he wiped off his colours at the horse, when he found that his long wished-for design had been thus most happily executed.

Many excellent designs doubtless owe their origin to chance. Leonardo da Vinci says, "the spots which are seen on an old wall, forming confused masses of different subjects, may excite genius, and help it to produce something;" and it has often been an amusing exercise of the ingenious to develop the irregular and fanciful lines in veined marbles into perfect and intelligible pictures.

The idea of the elegant Corinthian capital was first suggested by an accidental circumstance, which is thus recorded: A young maid of Corinth dying, her mother or nurse collected in a basket the toys of which she had been fond, and carried them to her grave, where she left the basket, covered with a tile. It happened to be set upon an acanthus, which, being thus depressed in the middle, spread its leaves and stalks outwards, and grew up the sides of the basket, till, reaching the tile placed on the top, they were again depressed; at which time Callimachus, the sculptor, chanced to pass the grave, and, pleased with

the graceful appearance of the foliage, applied it to the formation of the capital, afterwards called Corinthian.



The Gothic style of architecture, especially the windows,

> "Slender shafts of shapely stone,
> By foliaged tracery combined,"

sprang, it has been imagined, from the beauty and simplicity observed in the interlacing of the lighter branches of appropriate trees. For another origin of it, we are indebted to Sir James Hall, of Dunglass. In his Essay on Gothic Architecture, he has with great ingenuity and plausibility traced the Gothic order through its various forms, and seemingly eccen-

trie ornaments, to an architectural imitation of wicker-work; of which, as we learn from some of the legends, the earliest Christian churches were constructed. In such an edifice, the original of the clustered pillars is traced to a set of round posts, begirt with slender rods of willow, whose loose summits were brought to meet from all quarters and bound together artificially, so as to produce the frame-work of the roof; and the tracery of our Gothic windows is displayed in the meeting and interlacing of rods and hoops, affording an inexhaustible variety of beautiful forms of open work. As Sir Walter Scott has beautifully described it—

> "Thou wouldst have thought some fairy's hand,
> 'Twixt poplars straight the osier wand,
> In many a freakish knot, had twined;
> Then framed a spell, when the work was done,
> And changed the willow wreaths to stone."

As the older masters often repeated their best pieces, the circumstance of there being two or three of the same subject, is no argument against their genuineness. At the same time, some copies have deceived the most skilful judges. The following is, perhaps, the best instance of the fidelity and masterly execution of a copy. Frederick II. Duke of Mantua, going through Florence on his way to Rome, paid a visit to the Medici palace; over one of the doors he saw the portrait of Pope Leo X. between Cardinal de Medici and Cardinal de Rossi; the heads were painted by Raphael, and the drapery by Julio Romano, and altogether it was an admirable painting. The duke looked earnestly at it, and became so much in love with it, that he could not forbear begging it of Pope Clement VII. when he reached Rome. His holiness very graciously gave it to him, and ordered his

secretary, Octavian de Medicis, to put the picture in a case and send it to Mantua. Octavian, who was a lover of painting, and loath to deprive Florence of such a rarity, invented an excuse to defer sending it, pretending that the frame was not rich enough, and that he would get another fitted up for it; this delay gave him time to have it copied by Andrea del Sarto, who imitated even the little spots on it. The copy was so like the original, that Octavian could hardly distinguish one from the other; and that he might not be deceived, he put a private mark on the back of it, and sent it to Mantua.

The duke received it with great satisfaction, not doubting but that it was the work of Raphael and Julio Romano; the latter was then in the service of the duke, and had no suspicion of its being a copy; but Vasari, who had seen it whilst painting, disabused him; for, going to Mantua, he was well entertained by Julio Romano, who showed all the duke's rarities, saying, the finest was still to be seen, naming the painting of Leo X. Vasari said it was very fine, but not Raphael's. Julio, looking attentively, said, "How! not Raphael's! do I not know my own work, do I not see the strokes of my pencil?" Vasari replied, "You do not observe it closely enough; I saw Andrea del Sarto draw that very picture, and you will see behind a mark, to distinguish it from the original." Julio finding this to be true, held up his hands with astonishment, and said, "I value it as much as if it was Raphael's, and am even more pleased, for it is very surprising to see so excellent a master so well imitated."

Sebastian Ricci excelled particularly in imitations of Paul Veronese, many of which he sold for originals, and even once deceived La Fosse. When the latter

was convinced of the imposition, he gave this severe but just reprimand to Sebastian—"For the future, take my advice, paint nothing but Paul Veroneses, and no more Riccis."

At the time when the French army were on their triumphant march through Italy, many Italians, who dreaded being plundered, were anxious to dispose of the valuables they possessed; so that the finest productions of art were everywhere offered for sums far below their value. To such an extent did this proceed, that the Pope at last issued his edict to forbid the exportation of all works of art, except with the permission of a committee learned in these matters, who had positive directions to let no works depart which might be considered a loss to the collections of the city. Lord Northwick was then at Rome, when, not a little to his surprise, an offer was made to him of the St. Gregory of Annibal Caracci; but it was added, that the transaction must be a secret, as the sending away of the picture would be prevented. What was to be done? A happy thought was hit upon. A poor dauber was sent for, who was ordered to paint, in body colour over it, a copy of the Archangel Michael, of Guido. This was done, and a vile affair it was. When it was finished, a learned cardinal on the committee was requested to see it. He came, and not a little did he smile at the taste of the purchaser; a gentle hint was given, that it was hardly worth the cost, but my lord was all raptures. When it arrived in England, several of the first collectors were invited to see the unpacking of it. Soon a humble imitation of the Michael of Guido stood before them. At first they stared at the picture, then at each other, then at my lord. "Really," said he, after a time, "you hardly admire the picture so much as I had

imagined persons of your judgment would have done. Give me a sponge, for the dust, I see, has destroyed some of the brilliancy of the colouring." A sponge was brought, and my lord began rubbing away at the picture. Not long had he rubbed, before to their surprise out peeped the head of St. Gregory; another rub, and the attendant angels appeared; again, and the whole of the magnificent picture was visible, to their great admiration and delight. Lord Northwick afterwards parted with it, and it is now one of the finest in the splendid collection of the Duke of Sutherland.

A laughable species of imposture was practised by a painter named John Mabuse, who lived in the service of the Marquis of Veren. Being informed that Charles V. intended to come and lodge with him, this noble, that he might receive him the more magnificently, ordered all his domestics to be dressed in white damask, Mabuse among the rest. Instead of being measured by the tailor, as were the other servants, the painter desired to have the silk, pretending that he would make it up in a whimsical form, whereas his intention was to sell the stuff to raise money for the tavern. This he did; and knowing that the emperor was to come by night, he thought he could manage the matter well enough during the dusk. He sewed therefore white paper together, and painted it damask with great flowers, and then took his place in the train of the marquis. Though the emperor saw the train by torch-light, he was so pleased that next day he would have them march again before him, more attentively to view them. He took particular notice of the painter's robe, saying he never saw so fine a damask before; the marquis sent for Mabuse, and the cheat was discovered. The emperor

laughed heartily; but the marquis, fearing it would be thought that he dressed his men in paper, threw Mabuse for some time into prison.

A singular instance of religious credulity exists, says Mr. Cumberland, in his Lives of the Spanish Painters, concerning a picture of the Immaculate Conception, by Juanes, and which was in the late college of Jesuits in Valencia. This picture is the object of general veneration, and by the devout and credulous is considered almost equal to the Virgin herself; for tradition reports, that it was painted by order of Father Martin Alberto, to whom the Blessed Virgin condescended to appear on the eve of the Assumption, and required of the holy father to cause her portrait to be painted in the dress she then wore. Alberto committed to Juanes the honourable office of fulfilling the command which he was himself unable to execute. After many unsuccessful trials, Juanes at last succeeded; and by means of elaborate acts of penance and great contrition, the work was sanctified, and the pencil—like a sword blessed and made invincible by the Pope—never missed its stroke. It is said that Juanes being one day seated on a scaffold at work upon the upper part of the picture, the frame gave way, and the painter being in the act of falling, the holy personage, whose portrait he had fortunately finished, stepped suddenly from the canvas, and seizing his hand preserved him from the fall; this being done and Juanes safely landed on the floor, the gracious lady with all composure returned to her post.

Mr. Evelyn, in his "Diary," notices a celebrated picture in the Annunciata at Florence, by Bartolomeo, who spent his utmost skill on the face of the angel Gabriel, and being troubled that he could not exceed

it in that of the Virgin, he left it till the following morning; when, drawing away the cloth from before it, an admirable and ravishing face was found ready painted; at which miracle all the city came to worship it. It is reported that those who have the honour of looking at it never lose their sight.

The celebrated presentation picture by Rubens, given to Charles I. acted a great political part at the time, and was an ingenious artifice of the painter to further his views as a diplomatist. The fame of Rubens was long known to Charles, who had invited him to his court; his talents were of a superior class, and had already been employed at some of the courts of Europe. Having received instructions from Philip IV. of Spain how to act, Rubens arrived in England. Although the real object of his mission was diplomatic, he concealed it under the character of the painter, he being desirous of sounding how matters stood. Charles, an admirer of Rubens's works, received him with attention and respect: the artist painted a picture, in which all the blessings of peace are represented in glowing colours, and Minerva is exhibited driving away Mars, with the concomitant miseries of war. This picture he presented to the king, and took an opportunity of alluding to the then state of Europe, and the benefits which might result from an arrangement between England and Spain. The king listened with attention, and expressed himself disposed to accede to a compromise; Rubens, who had hitherto abstained from showing the true cause of his visit to England, now produced his credentials as envoy, and a treaty was shortly after concluded.

The Spanish painter, Velasquez, had a mulatto slave, Juan de Pareja, who was employed in mixing his colours; and who, catching some of the inspira-

tion of his master's art, became ambitious of trying his skill. The disqualification of his condition was such, that to touch the most liberal of the arts with the hand of a slave was danger in the extreme. The castes in India do not stand at a greater distance from each other, than degrees of men in Spain; and Velasquez, of all men, was least likely to brook a violation so presumptuous as that which Pareja meditated. The temptation was ever present, and the impulse of genius in the end was irresistible: in stolen moments, Pareja, by the force of talent, became an accomplished artist. Ambition now inspired him with higher wishes, and he meditated on a method of making his skill known to the monarch, Philip IV., who was accustomed, on visiting the studio of Velasquez, to order the pictures that stood with their faces to the wall, to be turned that he might see them. This suggested to Pareja the hint of substituting one of his own; and the experiment happily succeeded. The king coming, ordered the frame to be turned; Pareja eagerly obeyed, and presented to the royal view a piece composed by a slave and a mulatto, and which, in point of excellence, would have done honour to a free artist. It was not easy to appeal to a better judge than the king. Pareja fell on his knees, avowing the guilt of the performance, and implored protection. "Velasquez," said the king, "you must not only overlook this transgression, but also observe that such talents ought to emancipate the possessor." This generous decree was obeyed; but the grateful freedman persisted to serve his former master, and, after the death of Velasquez, he continued his services to his daughter.

Picture-dealing, as a trade, is as open to imposition as horse-dealing, and those purchasers who are but

indifferent judges become every day victims to this successful mode of imposture.

Nicholas Laniere, an Italian painter in the time of Charles I., seems to have been an adept in all the arts of picture-craft. Sanderson speaks of him as the first who passed off copies for originals; by tempering his colours with soot, and then rolling his works up, he made them crackle and contract an air of antiquity. The same appearance has been produced, in more modern times, by using a dark varnish to new pictures, and baking them in a slow oven. Thus, in a short time, they acquired the venerable appearance of age, provided, that is to say, they were not over-baked.

The author of the "Elements of Art" alludes to a pretended discovery of the Venetian secret of colouring, which occasioned, a few years since, no small sensation in the world of taste. The degree to which enthusiasm may get the better of discretion, was strikingly exemplified on that occasion.

This supposed secret method of colouring was found among the manuscripts of a Captain Morley, who had travelled in Italy. It was said to be the process used by Titian, Bassano, and others of the Venetian school. Several of our artists and connoisseurs were so certain that this was the fact, that they gave the possessor of the papers a valuable consideration for the secret they contained, which was communicated to them under an obligation not to divulge it; the process, however, has never answered the expectations that were previously entertained concerning it.

Where vanity without judgment induces any one to purchase copied pictures for originals at great prices, it is often dangerous to endeavour to convince

them of their infatuation. A noted collector in the reign of George II., consulted Richardson, the painter, respecting a picture which he had purchased for a Guido. "There is," said he, "little Hugh Howard, who says it is a copy; the next time he says so, I will certainly knock him down. Now pray, Mr. Richardson, favour me with your candid opinion!"

With regard to forming a judgment on pictures, it is a most curious circumstance that inexperienced persons, even with good taste, may mistake an original for a copy; for it is by no means a very rare occurrence, that a genuine and valuable picture shall have been disguised and disfigured by being in part painted over again, in an inferior style, either for the fraudulent purpose of more effectually concealing it for a time, or from the mistaken vanity of the painter. One well versed in the art and mystery of picture-cleaning can instantly detect the superiority of the picture, though in disguise, and can ingeniously remove all the parts more recently painted, leaving its original beauty uninjured.

Sir Joshua Reynolds, in his "Journey through Flanders and Holland," brings serious charges against the picture-cleaners, who, by their injudicious attempts to repair the injuries of time, had very much disfigured or spoiled some of the most valuable paintings.

Between forty and fifty years since, a society started with great pretensions, and, in one of the reports it published, it gave the following account of itself:—"The novelty of the Polygraphic Society renders it necessary to inform those still ignorant, that it is a new art for multiplying and taking pictures from the original, in oil colours, by a chemical and mechanical process. This art was, after many

years' labour and experience, invented by Joseph Booth, a portrait-painter, and offered to the public under the name of Polyplasiasmos. He communicated his project to a few gentlemen of respectability, who, convinced that an invention of such merit, if properly countenanced, would be an object of national advantage, and do honour to our age and country, by introducing more accurate pictures than has heretofore been done at so low a price, united themselves for its support, under the title of the Polygraphic Society. They propose a public exhibition of the copies of the best paintings of the old and modern masters, when the original, with the polygraphic pictures produced from them, will be presented together, to convince the patron of the fine arts how nearly their productions approach the original. They have resolved, to prevent their becoming too common, to limit the number of each subject, so that, at the utmost, there will not be more than one of any subject *in each county*. Some of the prices demanded, as compared with the original, are as follows:—A Claude; a 'Seaport,' valued at one hundred guineas, for ten guineas. Van Ostade; 'A Gale' and 'Calm,' a pair, for the same sum. A Claude, 'Seaport,' which cost the society four hundred guineas, (when the copies have been a little mellowed by time they will possess an air of antiquity), twenty guineas."

The society affirmed that, by this "secret process," the correctness of the drawing and the spirit, colouring, and effect, of the best masters, either old or modern, were so closely imitated as to render those pictures scarcely distinguishable from the originals themselves, even when hung in the same room. At least eight exhibitions of the copies took place; but

the society did not long exist, and nothing more has been heard of the process which it employed. "Notwithstanding its attempt to force itself into fame, and with all its claims to ingenuity," says Mr. Buchanan, "it proved a meteor only for a moment, to surprise and be forgotten."

A process, no doubt somewhat analogous, has recently been applied to working engravings in oil colours. Numerous blocks are used, and the effect produced is striking. The art is yet in its infancy, but it seems capable of becoming highly useful and ornamental.

An intermediate kind of art, between painting and sculpture, is the manufacture of mosaics. Some ancient pieces remain, and that which is called the Furietti Doves, now in the Museum of the capital, is a most beautiful specimen of the art. It represents four doves, perched on the rim of a vase, and was found in the ruins of Adrian's villa at Tivoli. Pliny mentions a worker in mosaic, who represented, in a pavement, the relics and scraps of a supper, with such admirable precision and exactness, that the floor of the room seemed never to be cleansed, but always to be covered with bones, parings, and similar refuse. In this case the skill of the artist is certainly more deserving of praise than the choice of a subject.

The true mode of working in mosaic was first disseminated in Italy, in the thirteenth century, by Andrea Taffi, a Florentine, who learned it from a Greek artist, named Apollonius, who, with some of his countrymen, was employed to decorate the church of St. Mark, at Venice. His greatest work is a Dead Christ.

The portrait of Paul V., in the Borghese palace, was executed by Marcello Piovenzale, in mosaic, in

imitation of the antique, if not in a superior style. The face alone consists of two million pieces, many of which are not larger than a grain of sand.

In the manufacture of mosaics, at Rome, it is stated that seventeen thousand tints of colour are employed in imitating the finer paintings. But in the amusing work of the celebrated Goethe, "Winkelman, und sein Jahrhundert," it is asserted, that about fifteen thousand varieties of colour are employed by the same workers, and that there are fifty shades of each variety from the darkest to the palest. It would be imagined that, with the command of seven hundred and fifty thousand tints, the most beautiful and varied paintings might be perfectly imitated; but even with all these a want is sometimes experienced.

The Mexicans had the power of most ingeniously imitating paintings in a mosaic of feathers; a miniature of the Crucifixion, containing many figures, is thus executed, "and is preserved," says Mr. Dallaway, "in the Ashmolean Museum." The labour employed in these pieces was immense. To obtain the materials, birds of the finest plumage were reared, and at certain seasons the feathers were collected and sold to the artists. When a mosaic was to be executed, several artists combined their talents. A design having been agreed upon, each artist charged himself with the performance of a certain part of it. Almost the patience of Job was necessary for such a task. A whole day is said to have been frequently spent in the adjustment of a single feather. Feather after feather was rejected, till one was found which was exactly suitable in size and hue. The feather was taken up with delicate pincers, and was fastened on wood or copper with a glutinous substance, and carefully smoothed. If the least derangement took

place, the work of it was again gone over. Nothing less than the most perfect smoothness and correctness would satisfy the workman. When each artist had completed his portion, the whole of them met to form the complete image; and here again the difficulty and expense of time and skill must have been great. "These images," says Acosta, "are deservedly admired; for it is wonderful how it was possible, with the feathers of birds, to execute works so fine and so equal, that they appear the performance of the pencil; and, what neither the pencil nor the colours in painting can effect, they have, when viewed from aside, an appearance so beautiful, so lively and animated, that they give delight to the sight. Some Indians, who are all artists, copy whatever is painted with a pencil so perfectly with plumage, that they rival the best painters in Spain."

Paintings have been imitated, with more or less success, in silk and other materials. The most successful imitator of the works of the pencil is undoubtedly our countrywoman, Miss Linwood, whose productions, in coloured wool, almost rival the original pictures.

In the convents of Brazil, flowers are imitated by means of feathers, in such a manner as to emulate nature. The lightness, the gloss, and the brilliant tints of feathers, give them a great advantage over the coarser substances which are commonly used in the making of artificial flowers.

A very ancient fraud, connected with architecture, is mentioned by Sandys, in the curious and rare narrative of his travels in the East. One of the Ptolemies caused a tower to be built, of a wonderful height, at Pharos, having many lanterns at the top for the use of ships at sea during the night. It was

reputed the seventh wonder of the world, and was named after the island on which it stood. Sostratus of Cnidos, the ambitious architect, was refused by the king the satisfaction of setting his name to the work. This, however, the artist effected, by cutting an inscription on a block of marble to the following effect: "Sostratus of Cnidus, the son of Dexiphanes, to the gods protectors, for the safeguard of Sailors." This he encrusted over with a fictitious stone, on which was engraved a pompous inscription in honour of the king, that the external crust might decay in a few years, leaving the inscription in honour of the artist fair and indelible.

Michael Angelo, to try how far he could impose upon the curious in sculpture, carved a statue of Cupid. Having broken off the arm, he buried the rest of the figure under a certain ruin, where they were wont to dig in search of marbles. It was soon after discovered, and passed among the learned antiquaries for an invaluable and undoubted piece of ancient sculpture, till Michael Angelo produced to them the arm previously broken off, which fitted so exactly as to convince them of their too easy credulity, and the vanity of their speculations.

In the year 1678 was erected the animated statue of Charles I. at Charing-cross. It was cast in brass, in 1633, by Le Sœur, it is believed, by order of that munificent encourager of the arts, Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel. The parliament, in Cromwell's time, ordered it to be sold, and broken to pieces; but J. River, the brazier who purchased it, having more taste than his employers, or seeing with the prophetic eye of good sense that the powers which were would not remain rulers very long, dug a hole in his garden in Holborn, and buried it unmutilated. To

prove his obedience, he produced to his masters several pieces of brass, which he told them were parts of the statue; and, in the true spirit of trade, he cast a number of handles for knives and forks, offering them for sale as composed of the brass which had formed the statue. This pleased all parties; they were eagerly sought for, and purchased by the loyalists from affection to their murdered monarch, and by the other party as trophies of the triumph of liberty over tyranny. When the second Charles was restored, the statue was brought forth from its place of concealment.

There was also a statue erected to Charles II. by Sir Robert Viner, in 1675, as is recorded by Stowe in his Survey of London, in a place called the Stocks-market, now the site of the Mansion House, which underwent a metamorphosis. This equestrian statue was originally made for John Sobieski, king of Poland; but, by some accident, had been left on the workman's hands. To save time and expense, the Polander was converted into a Briton, and, to complete the compliment to Charles, a Turk, which was underneath the horse, was converted into Oliver Cromwell. Unfortunately the turban on the Turk's head was overlooked, and was an undeniable proof of the truth of the story*. When the present Mansion House was about to be built, Robert Viner, Esq. applied to the Court of Common Council, to have this statue erected by his ancestor delivered to him, and the court complied with his request.

* It need not excite much surprise, to find a Turk's head on Oliver Cromwell's shoulders; for it was not long ago, that an itinerant showman had drawn up his caravan at the corner of High-street, Mary-le-bone, and was reaping a rare harvest by exhibiting the very identical skull of Oliver Cromwell *when a boy!*

## CHAPTER XIII.

### IMPOSTURES IN ENGRAVING.

Fashion of decrying modern Artists—M. Picart asserts the Merit of modern Engravers—Means employed by him to prove the Truth of his Assertions—"The Innocent Impostors"—Goltzius imitates perfectly the Engravings of Albert Durer—Marc Antonio Raimondi is equally successful—Excellent Imitation of Rembrandt's Portrait of Burgomaster Six—Modern Tricks played with respect to Engraved Portraits—Sir Joshua Reynolds metamorphosed into "The Monster."

About a century since, it was the fashion, among the would-be pretenders in matters of taste, to decry the works, and depreciate the talents, of the engravers of that time, in comparison with the earlier artists. This induced M. Picart, an ingenious engraver, to undertake the task of exposing the fallacious reasoning of these *cognoscenti*, who asserted that they could easily distinguish the works of the earlier painters, which had been engraved by themselves; and, secondly, that, as an engraver could never attain the picturesque style, they could easily distinguish whether an engraving was the work of a painter, or of merely an engraver; and, thirdly, that the modern engravers could not copy the paintings of the older masters so well as the contemporary engraver.

In direct opposition to these frivolous conceits, M. Picart asserted that the plates engraved by Signor Contarini, after Guido, were much preferable to those incontestably engraved by Guido himself; and also, that the works of Gerard Audran, an engraver by profession, were touched with as much spirit as could possibly have been given by a painter.

To put it to the test of experiment, however,

Picart chose some designs of the earlier painters, which had not been engraved, worked at them in secret, stamped some of them on old paper, and dispersed them quietly; and no one ventured to doubt but that they had been both engraved and printed in Italy. Having by this artifice sufficiently disproved the validity of those assertions which tended to depreciate the modern engravers, M. Picart collected in one volume all the plates he had so circulated, and they were afterwards published under the name of "Picart's Innocent Impostors."

Goltzius, a celebrated engraver of an earlier period, had recourse to a somewhat similar artifice, to convince the world of the malevolent detraction of certain rival artists, who, to humble Goltzius, were accustomed to say that his works were not to be compared with those of Albert Durer, or Lucas of Leyden. He therefore engraved the Circumcision, after the manner of Albert Durer, stamped below with his own name and mark; some impressions were taken off on old and discoloured paper, and his name was burnt out, or otherwise effaced. This plate went thus in masquerade to Rome, Venice, and Amsterdam, and was received by all the amateurs and curious with astonishment and pleasure, and was purchased at a very high price by those who esteemed themselves too happy to have found an opportunity of possessing themselves of an engraving by Albert Durer. Soon after, the same plate appeared entire, and freshly stamped with the name and mark of Goltzius; the connoisseurs were of course greatly confused and extremely angry, and the malevolent jealousy of his rivals was exposed to the world.

Marc Antonio Raimondi raised himself into notice

in the following manner: many engravings by Albert Durer were brought to Venice for sale, and Raimondi was so much struck by the style and execution, that he purchased them, and set to work to copy them, counterfeiting Albert Durer's mark, A.D. These copies appeared so similar, that they were believed to be the genuine works of Albert, and, as such, were exposed to sale, and became speedily purchased. This made Albert so indignant, that he quitted Flanders, and came to Venice, to make a complaint against Raimondi to the Government: and he was forbidden in future to make use of Albert's name or mark.

The engraving of the Burgomaster Six, the patron of Rembrandt, was so much valued, and so scarce, that Beringhen could not obtain it for any money; and he, therefore, procured a copy of it to be made with a pen, and afterwards washed with Indian ink, which was in the French king's cabinet at the time M. Gersaint wrote Rembrandt's life, and was so excellent an imitation, that it deceived several good judges.

The tricks of transmutation which are often played with copper-plate engravings are well known. At the time when the person so justly execrated and branded with the name of "The Monster," made such a noise, the dealer in one of the catchpenny accounts of his life and adventures was very desirous of giving to the public some representation of him. Not being able suddenly to procure one, it was necessary for him to find a substitute. An old plate, which had been engraved for a magazine, and intended to pass for a likeness of Sir Joshua Reynolds, was luckily obtained, and was made to answer the purpose. As the print bore no resemblance whatever to Sir Joshua, and had indeed a most unprepossessing appearance, the original

inscription was erased, "The Monster" substituted, and it did very well. In the ephemeral publications which daily issue from the press similar metamorphoses are by no means uncommon.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### FORGED INSCRIPTIONS AND SPURIOUS MEDALS.

Ancient Memorials of Geographical Discoveries—Mistakes arising from them—Frauds to which they gave occasion—Imposture of Evemerus—Annius of Viterbo wrongfully charged with forging Inscriptions—Spurious works given to the World by him—Forged Inscriptions put on Statues by ignorant modern Sculptors—Spurious Medals—Instances of them in the Cabinet of Dr. Hunter—Coins adulterated by Grecian Cities—Evelyn's Directions for ascertaining the Genuineness of Medals—Spurious Gold Medals—Tricks of the Manufacturers of Pseudo-Antique Medals—Collectors addicted to pilfering Rarities—Medals swallowed by Vaillant—Mistakes arising from Ignorance of the Chinese Characters.

It appears to have been the practice of the early Greek navigators to leave memorials on shores discovered for the first time, and to take possession of them by a dedication to one of their gods or heroes; as modern navigators in their discoveries have usually named prominent headlands, islands, or secure harbours, from some statesman or hero of the day.

These ancient inscriptions being found among barbarous nations by succeeding navigators, when the original discoverers were forgotten, it might be concluded that those heroes, to whom the shores had been merely dedicated in the first instance, had *actually* been there.

The probability of such circumstances led the way in after times to a species of fraud, for conferring a

spurious antiquity on certain places and things by persons, producing, as authentic and ancient, histories and monuments of their own manufacture.

Evemerus, a Messenian, or, according to some writers, a Sicilian, a contemporary of Cassander, king of Macedon, seems to have been the first who attempted this kind of fraud; for he pretended to have found on a golden column, in an ancient temple in the island of Panchæa, a genealogical account of a family that had once reigned there, in which were comprised the principal deities then worshipped by the Greeks. Not only were their lives recorded, but also their deaths; and thus a deadly blow was aimed at their divinity. This fable was translated into Latin by Ennius.

Annius of Viterbo, who was born at Viterbo, in 1432, and whose real name was John Nanni, has been charged with framing inscriptions from his own imagination, and burying them in certain places, that, when they had acquired an appearance of antiquity, he might pretend to find, and might vend them. He is also said to have manufactured medals of an early date. Both these charges, are, however, erroneous. It is nevertheless certain that, accompanied by his own commentaries, he presented to the world, as genuine, the pretended works of several exceedingly ancient authors; for this he has incurred much odium, but it is believed, by many learned men, that, instead of being a forger, he was himself deceived by forged manuscripts. This fraud gave rise to a violent controversy, in which many of the most eminent literary men were engaged.

The great uncertainty relative to the genuineness of inscriptions on ancient statues, originated in the ignorance or fraud of those who restored them.

Even Phædrus, in the application of a fable at the beginning of his fifth book, alludes to this practice in his time by mercenary artists. "The name of Apollodorus, on the plinth of the Venus de Medicis," says Mr. Dallaway, "has been detected as a modern forgery. The statues which have been dug up in a mutilated state, and placed in the hands of venal or ignorant artists, have always had the name of some eminent character given to them. Doubts of genuineness are at least allowable, and often justified, of those statues the hands of which have been evidently engrafted."

The fabrication of spurious coins for the market was neither a modern contrivance nor of unfrequent occurrence. The collection of medals belonging to Dr. Hunter affords some examples. One of a leaden coin, cased in silver, as remote as the time of Seleucus, king of Syria, may be seen in that cabinet; and also a similar coin of the city of Naples. In the Roman series, Neumann makes mention of a remarkable instance from Schulzius, of a leaden coin of Nero, which had been anciently circulated for brass, in which metal it was enclosed. In Dr. Hunter's cabinet are two examples of leaden coins covered with gold; one of the Emperor Trajan, the other of his successor.

Demosthenes relates, on the authority of Solon, that several cities in Greece adulterated their coins; and Dion Cassius states, that the Emperor Caracalla, instead of gold and silver, issued brass and leaden coins, which were merely washed or cased with silver or gold, to conceal the fraud.

Evelyn, in his "Numismata," exposes many of the tricks of those who, at the period at which he wrote, supplied the market with spurious coins and medals. "The most likely means," says he, "for procuring

genuine coins or medals, are from country people, who plough and dig about old walls, mounds, &c., where castrametations have formerly been. The composition or grouping of the figures should also be well considered, that it be with judgment; for the ancients seldom crowded many figures together. A perfect medal has its profile and out-strokes sharp, and by no means rugged; the figures clean and well polished, and an almost inimitable spirit of antiquity and excellence, in the most ancient. Yet after much research, travel and diligence, cost and caution, one is perpetually in danger of being deceived, and imposed upon, by cheaters and mercenary fourbes; and even the country people, in Italy and Holland, often deceive the less wary medallist. Where a series of ancient medals is known to be imperfect, suspicion should always attach to him who pretends to supply the chasm, and complete the series.

"All medals of gold, Greek or Roman, that are not of the best alloy, are to be considered impostures.

"The manufacturers of pseudo-antiques, will raise and carve the effigies of one emperor out of another antique head of a less costly and rare description; for instance, an Otho out of a Nero; and also the reverses: nay, they have the address to slit and divide two several medals, and, with a certain tenacious cement, join the reverse of one to the head of the other, and so repair and trim the edges that it is impossible to discover the ingenious fraud. A partial deceit is often practised on the unwary, by taking off a part of a relievo, and applying it to another medal; by the same artifice and dexterity, the title of a genuine medal may be entirely altered, where there are but few letters, by pinching up a

letter in one part, or removing superfluous matter in another, so that in process of time the metamorphosis is complete."

Mr. Obadiah Walker accuses the Jews of being most industrious in putting off spurious medals. Some persons purposely bury medals near the remains of some Roman works, and then pretend to have found them by chance; as is also reported of a certain statuary, who carved the pseudo Hercules, and sold it at a great price, before the justly-admired original statue was discovered.

Rival collectors have been known to prey on each other's rarities, by clandestinely swallowing the most precious gem in a collection; at least an anecdote to this effect is related on the Continent, of Baron Storch, a celebrated gem collector.

The Abbé Barthelemi, taught by experience, was very careful how he exposed to visitors the rarities in the French cabinet of medals, of which he was the keeper; for in his account of the duties of his office he says, "Such a depositary as this cabinet of medals cannot safely be made public; several persons might put their hands on them at one time, and it would be easy to carry them off, or substitute such as are spurious or common. I had no other resource, after I had got rid of the groups, but to examine the shelves, at which they had been looking."

Vaillant, the celebrated numismatist, when pursued at sea by Algerine pirates, is said to have swallowed a whole series of Syrian kings. When he landed at Marseilles, he hastened to his friend, physician, and brother antiquary, Dufour, groaning horribly, with the treasures in his belly. Dufour was only anxious to know, whether the medals were of the higher empire; Vaillant showed him two or three, of which

nature had relieved him : a bargain was immediately struck, and on that very day an Otho was safely delivered.

The almost universal ignorance in Europe of the Chinese alphabet, and written character, has been the cause of some curious mistakes in deciding on the merits of certain coins. So little was a *professor* of Chinese, at Rome, versed in the language he professed to know, that he is said, by Mr. Pauw, to have mistaken some characters found on a bust of Isis for Chinese : which bust and characters were afterwards proved to be the work of a modern artist of Turin, made after his own fancy.

In Great Britain, we have, till recently, known still less of the Chinese language and literature than on the Continent. "It is not many years since," says Mr. Barrow, "that one of the small copper coins of China, stamped in the reign and with the name of the late Tchien-lung, was picked up in a bog in Ireland, and, being considered as a great curiosity, was carried to an indefatigable antiquary, whose researches have been of considerable use in investigating the ancient history and language of that island. Not knowing the Chinese character, nor their coin, it was natural enough for him to compare them with some language with which he was acquainted; and the conclusion he drew was, that the four characters on the face were ancient Syriac, and that the reverse appeared to be astronomical or talismanic characters, of which he could give no explanation. The Mantchoo Tartar characters of another coin he supposed to signify *p*, *u*, *r*, which he construed into *sors*, or lot; and it was concluded, that these coins must either have been imported into Ireland by the Phœnicians, or manufactured in the country; in which case the Irish must

have had an oriental alphabet. In either ease, these medals," it was sagely observed, " eontribute more to authenticate the ancient history of Ireland than all the volumes that have been written on the subjeet."

---

## CHAPTER XV.

### SEPULCHRAL AND PERPETUAL LAMPS.

Belief in ever-burning sepulchral Lamps—Such Lamps supposed to have originated with the Egyptians—Reason of their Origin—Various Shapes of Egyptian Lamps—Description of one—Lamp said to have been found in the Tomb of Pallas—Its unextinguishable nature—Lamp and embalmed Body mentioned by Pancirollus—Observation of Ferrarius—Perpetual Lamps in the Temple of Jupiter Ammon and at Edessa—Kircher on the Formation of Perpetual Lamps—Trithemius's Recipes to make them—Why such Lamps were supposed to be possible in Egypt—Sir Thomas Browne's Conjectures respecting them—Modern Philosophers anxious to form Perpetual Lamps—Suggestions of Dr. Plott respecting the Method of making them.

MANY learned and ingenious authors, who have written coneerning sepulchral lamps, have believed, and strenuously asserted, that they have burned for several hundred years; and would have eontinued burning, perhaps for ever, had they not been broken by the aecidental digging into the tombs where they were, by husbandmen and others. There are not many, who affirm that they were *eye-witnesses* of the faet, but they give abundanee of instanees on the report of others.

The origin of these lamps seems to have been with the Egyptians, who, through a firm belief of the metempsyehosis, endeavoured to proeure a perpetuity to the body itself, by balsams or embalming, and seeurity to it afterwards, by lodging it in pyramids or eatacombs: so also, they endeavoured to animate the

defunct by perpetual fire, the essence of which answered to the nature of the soul in their opinion; for with them fire was the symbol of an incorruptible, immortal, and divine nature.

They signified life by a lamp, and the bodies being deposited in subterranean caves, they provided lamps to burn perpetually, to the end that their souls might not lie miserably imprisoned in darkness, or thereby any hurt befal them; but, on the contrary, enjoy eternal light: or, that when the soul should wander —which it appears to have had the option of doing— it might not mistake its residence, but, guided by its lamp, safely return to its old quarters.

Kircher, in his "History of Egyptian Antiquities," relates that many lamps were found in the shape of dogs, men, bulls, hawks, &c., evidently in allusion to the ancient Egyptian worship. One of them he thought very prettily emblematic of life, death, and the resurrection: the lamp itself signified life; when extinguished, death; and the foramen in the middle, wherein they poured the oil, was covered with a heliotrope inverted,—"a flower," says he, "that is so called from its ever inclining towards the course of the sun; in the morning turning towards the east, at noon is erect, towards evening faces the west, and at night inclines to the earth, inquiring as it were for the sun buried under ground; and waiting for its resurrection the next morning: hence, seeming to intimate the night of death which bodies suffer under ground, and withal to show, according to the opinion of the ancients, that the souls of the deceased tarry with their bodies in the grave *."

* Ψυχη, in Greek, signifies both the human soul and a butterfly; so forcibly were the ancients struck with the analogy between the wonderful transformation of the insect, and the survival and

One of the most remarkable of the sepulchral lamps has been thus described as found in the tomb of Pallas. In the year 1501, a countryman, digging deep into the earth, near Rome, discovered a tomb of stone, wherein lay a body, so tall that, being erected, it overtopped the walls of that city, and was as entire as if newly buried, having a very large wound on the breast, and a lamp burning at the head, which could neither be extinguished by wind nor water; so that they were forced to perforate the bottom of the lamp, and by that means put out the flame. This was said to be the body of Pallas, slain by Turnus; the following verses being inscribed on the outside of the sepulchre:—

> "Filius Evandri Pallas, quem lancea Turni
> Militis occidit; more suo jacet hic."

This extraordinary lamp is said to have burned two thousand five hundred and eleven years; and perhaps would have continued to burn to the end of the world, had it not been broken, and the liquid spilt!

It need hardly be remarked, at the present day of intellectual advancement, that this story of the size of Pallas, and of the lamp whose contumacious flame, well befitting such a giant, defied both the light of

liberty of the soul after its separation from the body. The resemblance between our living soul, this "animula, vagula, blandula," and that mysterious insect, appeared to them so strong that it is one of the most common and favourite emblems exhibited on their medals. The idea of the resurrection both of soul and body has always been very general, whether we may consider it the traditionary remains of the Scripture or the reasonings of natural religion. Some of the people of America have preserved notions, which lead insensibly to the immortality of the soul, and even the resurrection of the body. The Peruvians observing that the Spaniards dug up the bodies of the Incas, to plunder them of the riches buried with them, earnestly besought them not to disperse their bones, for fear it should prevent their resurrection.]

day and blasts of wind, exceeds all belief, however gravely related. Yet the time was, when, instead of exciting contemptuous laughter, it was implicitly credited.

Pancirollus, with somewhat less of exaggeration, informs us, that in one of the monuments adorning the Appian Way, in the time of Paul III., there was found the body of a young lady, swimming in a kind of bath of precious oil or liquor, fresh and entire as if she had been living; neither her face discoloured, nor her hair disordered: at the feet burned a lamp, which suddenly expired at the opening of the vault, having flamed, as was computed, for fifteen hundred years; an inscription on the outside testifying that the fair inhabitant of the tomb was Tullia, the daughter of Cicero.

Ferrarius, in his time, very justly observed, that "such foolish and absurd stories, committed to print and posterity, are fit only for the hands of boys, or cucumber-headed men."

The existence of similar lamps from the same manufactory, has been as credulously related by other historians, addicted to the marvellous. The lamp in the Temple of Jupiter Ammon was reported by the priests to have burned continually, yet it consumed less oil each succeeding year; though burning in the open air, neither wind nor water could extinguish it. A similar lamp also burned in honour of Venus. Cedrenus describes a lamp at Edessa, hid at the top of a certain gate, which burned five hundred years.

"The manufacture of these lamps," says Kircher, "was ordered divers ways; firstly, miraculously, as that one at Antioch, which burned fifteen hundred years, in an open and public place, preserved by that

divine power who hath made so infinite a number of stars to burn with perpetual light; secondly, by the wiles of the devil, as St. Austin tells us, deceiving those who, out of avarice or curiosity, consult oracles, or worship false gods, the devil representing a flash or flame of light to them at their first entering into subterranean caves. Others assign natural causes, viz., a kind of *ignus fatuus*, or pellucid matter shining in the dark; such glimmering coruscations are frequently seen in churchyards and marshy grounds, especially at the breaking up of old tombs; miners also observe, that, at the first opening of a new vein of ore, such flames break forth."

Trithemius obliges his readers with two long recipes for the artificial manufacture of these lamps, yet seems to doubt their efficacy.

The *possibility* of such eternal lamps being manufactured in Egypt has been attributed to the existence of the bituminous wells or fountains, from which the learned in those days laid secret canals or pipes to the subterranean caves, where, in a convenient place, they set up a lamp with a wick of asbestos; thus the supply of oil or combustible matter was perpetual, the wick of asbestos inconsumable, and, of necessity, the light also endured perpetually.

Sir Thomas Browne, who exposed, in his "Pseudoxia Endemica," so many vulgar errors, thought he had arrived at the solution of the problem, "why some lamps, included in close vessels, have burned many hundred years, as that discovered in the sepulchre of Tullia, sister to Cicero,"—as he has it,—"or that of Olybius, many years after, near Padua? namely, because whatever their matter was composed of, either a preparation of gold or naphtha, their duration proceeded from the purity of the oil, which

yielded no fuliginous exhalations to suffocate the fire." But as the learned author has neglected to describe the nature of the oil, we are likely to descend into our graves, and remain, in posthumous darkness.

It seems, indeed, to have been thought a great desideratum in the arts to invent a perpetual lamp, or to discover, if possible, in what the ancient sepulchral lamps consisted; for the accounts of such appear to have been generally believed authentic up to the end of the seventeenth century; and philosophers were anxious to find out methods of preparing perpetually-burning lamps for the tombs; though for what earthly or unearthly reason it would be difficult to guess, unless as a complimentary and perpetual illumination to the manes of the departed, or from some foolish desire to strike wonder, in after times, in some casual beholder, unwittingly violating the tomb.

The philosophic Dr. Plott, in the year 1684, read, before the society of Oxford, a discourse concerning the sepulchral lamps of the ancients, showing the possibility of their being made divers ways; and he received the commands of the society to make experiments, with wicks of asbestos, gold wire, &c., but he placed most dependence on the first. The perpetual oil seemed a less difficulty, and, in his report, "he trusted the society would not judge him far from effecting the matter."

For home consumption he proposed the use of a naphtha, or liquid bitumen, found in and near Pitchford, in Shropshire, which was to be conveyed with care to any lamp fitted with the asbestos wick, and into which it should perpetually distil: "thus have we," says he, "an oil as everlasting as our wick, nor need we fear extinction if enclosed in a tomb or vault, in never so damp or moist a place."

Dr. Plott was unwilling to disbelieve the accounts of those lamps which were said to have burned one thousand or fifteen hundred years; and, far from thinking the exclusion of the air a disadvantage, he only considered it an advantage, that such would burn *as well* in the open air, for that they best nourished their flame where there was most want of it.

In corroboration of the truth of such tales, he alluded to the air extricated from the fissures in mines, now called fire-damp, and the occasion of so many disastrous explosions in them. This air, therefore, added he, is the fittest for sepulchral lamps. Yet the greatest difficulty still remained; how he could apply the air, or convey it from its original situation. This being apparently impracticable, the only remaining resource was, the production of a luminous appearance; and he concluded by saying, "now, let an exhausted recipient, with the included phosphorus, be placed in a tomb or vault, which is commonly dark, and, if ever found, and the outer glass broken, as usually such things are, by ignorant men employed in digging, *possibly* there will appear, upon immission of the air, as good a perpetual lamp as some said to have been found in the sepulchres of the ancients." This is a conclusion certainly as satisfactory as the object of the doctor's inquiries was useful; in the words of Rasselas, "a conclusion in which nothing is concluded."

## CHAPTER XVI.

### PANTOMIMIC DELUSIONS.

The Art of Mimiery in ancient and modern Times—Superiority of the Ancients in that Art—Advice given by Periander—Fable of Proteus—Education required by a Professor of the Pantomimic Art—Herodotus—Personation of the insane Ajax—Timocrates—Archimimes employed at Funerals—Demetrius the Cynic converted—Striking Effect of Pantomime on two Barbarian Princes—Pleasure felt by the Roman People on the Recal of Bathyllus—Contest of Bathyllus and Hylas—Anecdote of John Kemble—Pantomime in Italy—Acting of Portraits and historical Pictures in Italy—The Harlot's Progress represented as a Pantomime—War Dances of the American Indians.

Though the art of mimicry is, in its confined and modern sense, that of mere imitation of manners, and that not often of the most laudable species, yet, in former times, by the excellence of its action, did it impose on the imaginations of the spectators, and persuade them into a belief of the reality of what was represented, even as it were against conviction. A slight notice of such an art may therefore not be out of place, even in a record of the more prominent delusions of the human mind.

The endeavour of one or more individuals to express, or relate, in conjunction, any story by mere action, was carried to much greater perfection among the ancients than now appears to be possible; though, in a less degree, the modern ballet endeavours to relate some story or episode, by the joint means of music and action.

Gestures, says Lord Bacon, are transitory hieroglyphics. They became a species of rhetoric, and couch information and meaning were often couched under actions apparently insignificant. Periander,

for instance, being consulted how to preserve a tyranny newly usurped, bade the messengers attend, and repeat to those who sent them what they saw him do; whereupon he went into his garden, and topped the highest flowers, signifying that it consisted in cutting off and keeping low the nobility and grandees.

According to Lucian, a single dancer or mime was able to express all the incidents and sentiments of a whole tragedy or epic poem, by action, accompanied with music, as in the ancient recitation; and the fable of Proteus, he seemed to think, meant no more than that he was an accomplished pantomime.

The education of a mime would—by the same writer's description of his qualities—seem to have required his whole life to make himself master of his profession; for, says he, I shall now unfold the qualities which a good dancer ought to have, to show that this art is none of the easiest; for the pantomime, or dancer of the ballet, must know several things, as poetry, geometry, music, and philosophy; he must also have the secret of expressing the passion and motion of the soul which rhetoric teaches, and borrow from painting and sculpture the different postures and faces; above all, he has need of a memory; like Calchas, in Homer, he must know the past, the present, and what is to come, and have them always ready in his mind; in short, as the Pythian oracle said, the spectator must *understand* the dancer though dumb, and *hear* him though silent.

Herodotus says, "The eyes are more faithful than the ears, because you sooner believe what you see than what you hear."

Lucian mentions a famous mime, who played Ajax the madman so well, and raged in such a way, that one would have said he did not counterfeit, but was

mad in reality; and the spectators were so ravished with the extravagance they beheld, that they made a hundred ridiculous postures, as if they had been mad themselves.

Timocrates, a tutor in philosophy, and who, from conscientious motives, had declined being present at such games, by accident seeing a pantomime, cried out, "What admirable sights have I lost by a philosophical modesty!" and ever afterwards attended them.

This kind of scenic representation was given at funerals, and the actors were called archimimes; they went before the coffin, and imitated the gestures and actions of the deceased; his virtues and vices were exhibited, but the propensity to raillery inclined the mimes rather to reveal the frailties, than paint the virtues, of the departed.

Demetrius the cynic, a disciple of Apollonius Tyaneus, disdained and railed at the art, as an absurd and useless motion, and that all the success of the mimes was derived solely from the music; but a famous mime, in Nero's time, invited him to see him dance, and, having witnessed his performance, *then* to find fault with him. Having imposed silence on the music, he danced the story of the amours of Mars and Venus, the discovery of them by the Sun, and Vulcan catching them in his steel net; in short, so well was it done, that Demetrius, transported, cried out aloud, "I hear, my friend, what you act; I not only see the persons you represent, but methinks you speak with your hands."

A barbarian prince having come to Rome from Pontus, and witnessing the performance of this same man, begged him as a present from Nero, who asked the use he wanted to make of him. The prince

replied, that he had many nations bordering on his, all of which spoke different languages, and that he found it difficult to procure interpreters to them all; which difficulty would be removed by the possession of this man; since, by his movements and gesticulations, he could inform him of all the others had to negotiate.

Another barbarian, coming to see a piece which seemed to require five actors, and finding only one, inquired who would personate the other four; but, at the end of the exhibition, he said, "I was mistaken in you, my friend; who, though you have but one body, have five souls."

Augustus, by recalling Pylades, a banished pantomimist, greatly gratified the Roman people, and diverted their attention from popular ebullitions; for which reason, amongst others, it is said, they ceased to be angry with some inconvenient laws which that emperor had made.

The great rival of Pylades was Bathyllus; but he had another rival, one Hylas, a former pupil of his. Backed by the public, which had taken offence at an indiscretion committed by Pylades, Hylas ventured to challenge his former tutor to a trial of skill. The character of Agamemnon was that in which the competitors were to exhibit their talents. The better to personate the *great* leader of the Greeks, Hylas wore high buskins, and stood upon tiptoe. This mistake of physical for moral greatness was loudly applauded by the prejudiced spectators. Pylades at length came forward. His attitudes were noble and striking. His arms were crossed over his chest; his eyes were sometimes fixed in deep meditation on the ground, and sometimes turned to heaven. Every gesture and every look marked a sovereign who was pondering on the most important affairs. So expressive was his

action, that his enemies were not proof against the charm of it, and the theatre echoed with tumultuous acclamations. Turning to his baffled rival, Pylades coolly said, "Young man, we had to represent the king of kings; you made him tall, and I made him great."

John Kemble is said to have ironically confounded these distinctions, on the appearance of a new candidate for public approbation on the London stage, who exceeded the military standard considerably in height. After the performance, a critic asked Kemble what he thought of Mr. C———; alluding, of course, to his histrionic talent. "Why, sir," replied Kemble, in his dignified manner, "I think Mr. C——— a very tall man."

There is less to be said of this art in its present state, though pantomime, considered distinct from harlequinade, now receives great attention in Italy. The splendour of the getting up, and the decorations of the ballets, at the grand theatre of "La Scala," at Milan, exceed anything of the kind at other capitals; and the first dancers in such pieces receive continued applause for their exertions, though belonging rather to the department of the posture-master, than to that of descriptive imitation.

The "Somnambulist," however, as performed a few seasons since in England, was a fine specimen of dumb action. Some of the personifications or portraits of Mr. Durow, on horseback, were also executed with great cleverness*.

* It is a fortunate circumstance, both for Mr. Durow and his intelligent horses, that they live in the age they do; for, about the year 1690, a horse, that had been taught a few surprising pranks, was condemned to die for his profound learning, as an impious practitioner of the black art, by that supreme judge of the Christian faith, the Court of the Holy Inquisition.

The acting of portraits and historical pictures, exhibited with the greatest fidelity of costume and attitude, by amateurs at Florence, is another species of ingenious deception, which is almost perfect; and, having lately been made instrumental to the general purposes of the drama, is likely to become a fruitful source of attraction at our theatres, where it commenced with the exact representation of Wilkie's "Rent-day," and "Distraining for Rent." This idea, if followed up, will make our best artists scene-painters, in spite of themselves. This is not the first time that favourite subjects from the pencil of the artist have been adapted to the stage; for Mr. Ireland, in his "Illustrations of Hogarth," informs us, that the first series of that painter, "The Harlot's Progress," excited so much attention and expectation, that above twelve hundred names were entered in the subscription-book for the engravings: the whole series were copied on fan-mounts, three on one side, and three on the other. It was transferred from the copper to the stage, in the form of pantomime, by Theophilus Cibber, and again represented in a ballad opera, entitled "The Jew deceyed."

The war dance, among the native Americans, is most striking. It is the representation of a complete American campaign. The departure of the warriors from their village, their march into the enemy's country, the caution with which they encamp, the address with which they station some of their party in ambush, the manner of surprising the enemy, the noise and ferocity of the combat, the scalping of those who are slain, the seizing of the prisoners, the triumphant return of the conquerors, and the torture of the victims, are successively exhibited. The performers

enter with such enthusiastic ardour into their several parts; their gestures, their countenance, their voice, are so wild, and so well adapted to their various situations, that Europeans can hardly believe it to be a mimic scene, or view it without emotions of horror.

---

## CHAPTER XVII.

### MYSTERY OF THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK.

The Man with the Iron Mask proved to be Matthioli—Who Matthioli was—He is bribed by Louis XIV. to obtain the Surrender of Casale—He violates his Engagement with the French Monarch—Louis resolves to take Vengeance on him—Matthioli is lured into the Hands of the French Agents—He is made Prisoner—Instructions given by Louis, relative to the Treatment of the Prisoner—Matthioli is compelled to wear a Mask—A mad Jacobin Monk is confined with him—He is removed to Exilles—Again removed to the Island of St. Margaret—Manner in which he travelled—Anecdotes respecting him—He is again removed to the Bastile—His Death—Precautions taken after his Death to preserve Secrecy.

The curiosity of the public, says Mr. Agar Ellis, from whose clear and satisfactory work on this subject the following account has been condensed, has been, for above one hundred years, so much excited by the mystery which enveloped the name of the Man of the Iron Mask, that numerous papers have been written, and conjectures hazarded, in favour of different theories; all with some semblance of probability, yet all unsatisfactory. M. Delort, by consulting the archives of the French government, found the correspondence of the French ministers of that time, which proved, beyond a doubt, that the Man of the Iron Mask was an Italian of the name of Matthioli.

He entered into the service of Charles, third Duke

of Mantua, by whom he was much favoured, and was made secretary of state. Towards the end of the year 1677, the Abbé D'Estrades, ambassador from Louis the Fourteenth to the republic of Venice, was anxious to induce the Duke of Mantua to allow of the introduction of a French garrison into Casale; which place was, in a great measure, the key of Italy. D'Estrades sought a channel of communication to the Duke through Matthioli, who fell into his schemes, and, in a letter, offered to devote himself to Louis, whom, he said, he regarded and revered as a demigod. He had a terrible reason, afterwards, for altering his opinion of that implacable monarch.

In the further course of the treaty, between Louis and the Duke, it was proposed to send Matthioli to the French court. This it seemed D'Estrades was not anxious for, and he resolved to obstruct the departure of Matthioli for France as long as it was possible. Matthioli, however, of his own accord deferred his journey from the spring to the autumn, and arrived at Paris about the end of November, 1678. He had the honour of an interview with Louis, who gave him a ring of value, and promised greater things after the ratification of the treaty. He soon after returned to Italy.

Suspicions being, however, excited in the neighbouring states, at the report of the French troops assembling so near the territories of the Duke of Savoy, remonstrances were made to the proper authorities, and the agents of the French government became anxious to have the treaty ratified; but in the same proportion did Count Matthioli find fresh excuses for delay.

These excuses appear to have given the French court a suspicion of his fidelity, but it is not known

whether he was bribed by the Spaniards, or not sufficiently so by the French.

Reproaches and threats were now made by D'Estrades, and the treachery of Matthioli became every day more apparent; and it subsequently appeared that he had received a sum of money for his information from Turchi, one of the ministers of the Duchess of Savoy.

Matthioli informed the French agent, that the Duke of Mantua had been obliged to conclude a treaty with the Venetians, the object of which was directly opposed to that entered into with the French. M. Pinchesne, chargé d'affaires at Venice, though convinced of the perfidy of Matthioli, did not break with him, but advised him to go to confer with D'Estrades at Turin: Matthioli followed this advice, to his own ruin.

The vindictive Louis had, meanwhile, determined to satisfy his wounded pride and frustrated ambition, by taking signal vengeance on Matthioli, and he accordingly sent orders to D'Estrades to try and arrest and guard him in such a manner "that not only may he not have communication with any one else, but that he may have cause to repent of his own bad conduct." Matthioli complaining to D'Estrades of want of money, favoured the plan proposed by which to arrest him, as he was recommended to meet Catinat at the French frontiers near Pignerol; where also D'Estrades would be present.

Three miles from the place of rendezvous, they were stopped by a river, the bridge over which had been broken down by an inundation. Matthioli himself assisted to repair the bridge, over which he was to be conveyed into captivity.

Being questioned at the conference with Catinat, he informed those present where all the original papers

relative to the delivery of Casale would be found, though it seems this confession of his was false, as they were afterwards discovered, concealed in a wall at Padua.

He was then without ceremony arrested, and after his arrest no one was permitted to approach him: the most extraordinary precautions were taken against discovery, particularly that of obliging him to wear a mask during his journey when he saw any one, to conceal this violent breach of the law of nations; Matthioli being at this time plenipotentiary of the Duke of Mantua, for concluding a treaty with France: and the same reasons for concealment existed till his death, since that event happened while both Louis and the Duke of Mantua were still alive. This accounts for his confinement being always solitary and secret; one act of diplomatic treachery, however, could never warrant the infliction of the most horrible of all punishments, solitary confinement for twenty-four years in a dungeon; but Louis, whether as a man or a sovereign, was one of the most cruel and tyrannical characters transmitted to us in history.

By direction of D'Estrades, Matthioli was at first well treated, but his gaoler afterwards received the following instructions:—"It is not the intention of the king that the Sieur de Lestang,"—the name given to him,—"should be well treated, nor that, except the absolute necessaries of life, should he have anything given to him, that may make him pass his time agreeably." Repeated injunctions, to this effect, are a proof how much importance the rancorous Louis attached to his victim being compelled to drink his bitter draught of captivity to the very dregs. The harshness and hopelessness of his prison seem to have

affected the intellects of Matthioli;—nor can that excite much wonder,—for his gaoler, St. Mars, reports that in his frenzy and despair he used violent language, and wrote abusive sentences with charcoal on the walls of his prison. Being threatened with the blows of a cudgel, he became more quiet, and, to propitiate the man who attended him, he took a valuable ring from his finger and offered it to him, which, however, the attendant gave to St. Mars.

In the same prison was a Jacobin monk, who was also mad, probably from ill-usage and long confinement, and St. Mars put him with Matthioli, that the same priest might serve them both. Matthioli at first thought his companion was placed there as a spy, but was soon undeceived, as the monk started up naked, and began to preach. "I and my lieutenants," reported St. Mars, "saw all their manœuvres through a hole over the door;" and they appear to have derived much entertainment from such a miserable spectacle.

With regard to clothing, St. Mars was desired to make the clothes of such men as Matthioli last three or four years, which orders sufficiently refute the absurd stories of the richness of the lace, and fineness of the linen, worn by the man of the iron mask.

St. Mars was appointed to the government of Exilles, and was desired to take his two prisoners along with him; but the repairs requisite in the new prison, for the sake of secrecy, were done as if at the expense of St. Mars, the king allowing him privately one thousand crowns for that purpose. At Exilles, the prisoners were able to hear the persons who passed along the road, at the foot of the prison; but they could not be heard from the road.

No report appears to have been made of them till

1685, when it was said that the prisoners were still ill, but tranquil.

After a time the Jacobin died, and St. Mars, finding his own health fail, petitioned for a removal, and was appointed to the islands of St. Margaret and St. Honorat, on the coast of Provence. He was ordered to take Matthioli along with him.

During his journey the prisoner was conveyed in a chair covered with oil-cloth, and without its being possible for any one to see or speak to him. It seems, too, that the poor wretch was stinted even of the breath of heaven; for St. Mars sent the following report: "I was only twelve days on the journey, in consequence of the illness of my prisoner, occasioned, as he said, by not having air enough; and the manner in which he was guarded made everybody try to conjecture who he was."

It was, probably, during this journey that St. Mars first made use of a mask to hide his prisoner's features. This mask was not made, as has been erroneously supposed, of iron, but of black velvet, strengthened with whalebone, and fastened behind by a padlock. It did not prevent his eating or drinking.

The identity of the man in the iron mask and the unfortunate Matthioli is very satisfactorily proved by the evidence of the several reports and letters before referred to, as discovered in the archives of the French government, and which, for the further satisfaction of his readers, Mr. Agar Ellis has inserted in an appendix; but it has not been thought necessary to quote them more at large in this sketch of his misfortunes.

Matthioli's valet died at St. Margaret's, and a woman was engaged to wait upon him; but she

declined when she found she would never be permitted to see her family again.

Among the anecdotes given of this prisoner, and to enhance the romantic interest which has always been excited about his fate, it has been mentioned that this mysterious person wrote his name and qualities with the point of a knife on a silver plate, and threw it out of his window, and that it was picked up by a fisherman, who brought it to St. Mars. The fisherman, having asserted that he could not read, was released. Again, it is said that he covered one of his shirts with writing, and threw it also out of the window. A monk, having found it, took it to the governor, with a declaration that he had not read it; but two days after he was found dead in his bed.

These stories evidently spring from one of St. Mars' reports, in which he says, he has been obliged to inflict corporal punishment on a Protestant minister named Salves, because he would write things upon his pewter platter and his linen, in order to make it known that he was unjustly imprisoned for his faith.

After eleven years' confinement at St. Margaret's, Matthioli accompanied St. Mars to the Bastile. The same secresy as before prevailed during his journey to Paris. At dinner, he sat with his back to the light; and St. Mars opposite to him, with a brace of pistols on the table.

While he was in the Bastile, if he was ever allowed to go to mass, the Invalids who kept guard there were ordered to fire upon him if he spoke to any one.

At length he died, after five years' captivity in the Bastile. He was sixty-three years old; but he told the apothecary that he thought he was sixty—an inaccuracy easily to be believed in a man so long and rigorously confined.

After his death, every thing was done that could destroy all traces of his former existence; his clothes were burned, as well as the furniture of the room, all the plate of every kind was melted down, the walls of his chamber were scraped, and then fresh white-washed, the floor was new paved, the old ceiling taken down, the doors and windows burnt, and every corner most narrowly searched.

It has been stated, on more than one authority, that Louis the Fifteenth well knew who the celebrated state prisoner really was; and affirmed more than once, that he was the minister of one of the Italian princes; but this confession was considered at the time only to be an evasion, to put a stop to a more rigid inquiry. But let the unhappy victim be whom he might, such atrocious and persevering revenge deserves the execration of all who have not forgotten their feelings as men.

---

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE SOUTH SEA BUBBLE.

General Infatuation with respect to the South Sea Bubble—Literary Men caught the Infection—Gay, the Poet, loses all his Property—Chandler is ruined, and forced to become a Bookseller—Origin of the South Sea Scheme—The House of Lords is hostile to it—Difference of the South Sea and Mississippi Schemes—Lying Reports spread by Sir John Blunt, to raise the Price of Stock—Consequence of them—Change-alley is crowded by all Classes—Numerous Bubbles—Ludicrous Impudence of some of them—Downfall of the South Sea Scheme—Escape of Knight, the Treasurer—Bribes to Members of the Administration, &c.—Parliamentary Measures against the Guilty—The Bubbles put down by Proclamation—Sir R. Steele's Multiplication Table—Speculations in 1825.

Public credulity, founded on the inordinate desire of gain, was perhaps never exhibited in a stronger

point of view than by the fatal belief in the South Sea scheme, which, to the credulous adventurer, was made to appear a royal road to El Dorado.

The first act of this fearful drama passed off with the greatest eclat. The wand of the enchanter not only seemed to, but really did, for a time, instantly convert whatever it touched into gold. Waiving all the financial particulars in detail, this account will be confined to an outline of the imposture, which had such lamentable success through the greedy credulity of the public.

The South Sea project continued throughout its whole course to be applauded to the skies, by the unprincipled and unthinking, until its catastrophe plunged thousands into one common abyss of ruin. It was patronised by persons of both sexes, and in the highest ranks of society; nay, even by royalty itself, if the authority of the Duchess of Ormond, in a letter to Swift, may be deemed sufficient to authenticate the fact. Prior said in one of his letters, "I am tired of politics, and lost in the South Sea; the roaring of its waves and the madness of the people are justly put together."

Men of letters were not more exempt than others from the reigning infection. The poet Gay had a present of some South Sea stock given to him, and he once supposed himself worth twenty thousand pounds; his friends advised him to dispose even of a share of it, but, filled with dreams of wealth, he replied, that he could not bear to diminish his own fortune. He even refused to purchase an annuity of one hundred pounds, "which," said Fenton, "will make you sure of a clean shirt and a shoulder of mutton every day." At last, however, with the general wreck, everything he had possessed was totally lost,

and Gay himself had nearly sunk under the calamity.

Chandler, the learned non-conformist divine, lost his whole fortune; and for subsistence was obliged to open a bookseller's shop in the Poultry.

The history of this famous or rather infamous speculation was this:—the South Sea Company originated in the reign of queen Anne, in the year 1711; a fund being formed on the chimerical supposition that the English would be allowed to trade to the coast of Peru. Nine years elapsed until the projection of the great scheme, and 1720 witnessed the infancy, maturity, and decay of that celebrated delusion. Sir John Blunt, who was bred a scrivener, devised the scheme, and communicated it to Mr. Aislabie, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The pretence of this scheme was, to discharge the national debt, by reducing all the funds into one. The Bank of England and the South Sea Company vied with each other; but the South Sea Company ultimately offered such high terms that the proposal of the Bank was rejected: whilst this was in agitation, the stock of the company rose considerably.

Both houses of parliament debated the question, and the House of Lords opposed the bill, on the ground that it was calculated for enriching the few and impoverishing the many, and that it countenanced the fraudulent practice of stock-jobbing, which diverted the genius of the people from trade and industry, and that it would also give foreigners the opportunity to double and treble the vast sums they had in the public funds, with which they might withdraw to other countries, and England would thus be drained of its gold and silver.

This South Sea scheme produced a kind of national

delirium in England, and was, in a manner, a second act to one which took place a short time before on the Continent. Sir John Blunt, in fact, took his hint from Law's famous Mississippi scheme, which, in the preceding years, had raised such a ferment in France, and entailed ruin on thousands of families there. Law's scheme was as follows:—a royal bank was erected by subscription, and, having a fund in hand to answer bills on demand, the scheme began to take, and established its credit by its punctual discharge, till it increased to such an extraordinary magnitude as to pay bills for one million and a quarter sterling a day.

In this project of Law's, however, there was something substantial; an exclusive trade to Louisiana promised advantage, though the design was defeated by the frantic eagerness of the people. Law himself had become the dupe of the Regent, who transferred the burden of fifteen hundred millions of francs of the king's debt to the shoulders of the people, while the projector was sacrificed as the scapegoat of political iniquity.

The South Sea scheme promised no commercial advantage of any consequence; it was buoyed up by nothing but the folly and rapacity of individuals, who became so blind and extravagant, that Blunt, with moderate talents, was able to impose on the whole nation, and make tools of the other directors to serve his own purpose.

When the projector found that the South Sea stock did not rise to his expectation, he circulated reports that Gibraltar and Port Mahon would be exchanged for some places in Peru, by which means the South Sea trade would be protected and enlarged. This report acted like a contagion: in five days the directors opened their books for a subscription of one

million, at the rate of three hundred pounds for every hundred pounds of capital; persons of all ranks crowded to the house. The first subscription soon exceeded two millions of the original stock; in a few days the stock advanced to three hundred and forty pounds, and afterwards to one thousand pounds.

The Exchange-alley was filled with a strange concourse of statesmen, clergymen, dissenters, whigs, tories, physicians, lawyers, &c. &c., and even females. All other professions and employments were neglected, and the attention of people was wholly engrossed by this and other chimerical schemes, which subsequently obtained the appropriate name of bubbles *.

New companies started up every day, and all met with encouragement; an obscure projector, pretending to have formed a very advantageous scheme—which, however, he did not explain—published proposals for a subscription, in which he promised, that

* Bubble was a name given to all the extravagant projects for which subscriptions were raised, and negotiated at vast premiums in Change-alley, in the year 1720; a name, which alluded to their production by the boiling ferment of the South Sea scheme, and not to their splendour, emptiness, or inutility, for it did not become a name of reproach in this case till time completed the metaphor, and the bubble broke.

Bulls and Bears, those terms now so common on 'Change, are another legacy of the South Sea speculation. He who sells that of which he is not possessed is proverbially said to sell the skin before he has caught the bear. It was the practice of stock-jobbers, in 1720, to enter into contracts for transferring South Sea stock at a future time for a certain price; but he who contracted to sell, had frequently no stock to transfer, nor did he who bought, intend to receive any in consequence of his bargain; the seller was therefore called a bear, in allusion to the proverb, and the buyer a bull, perhaps only as a distinction. The contract was merely a wager, to be determined by the rise or fall of stock; if it rose, the seller paid to the buyer the difference proportioned to the sum determined by the same computation to the seller.

in one month the particulars would be disclosed; in the mean time, each person paying two guineas would be entitled to a subscription of one hundred pounds, which would produce that sum yearly. In one afternoon the advertiser received one thousand subscriptions, and in the evening he set out for another kingdom.

There were some shares of a fictitious company, called Globe permits, each of which came at last to be currently sold for sixty guineas and upwards; and yet were nevertheless only square bits of card, on which were the impression of a seal in wax, having the sign of the Globe tavern. A burlesque upon this reigning madness appeard as an advertisement; in which it was set forth, that at a certain fictitious place on the following Tuesday, books would be opened for a subscription of two millions, for the invention of melting down sawdust and chips, and casting them into clean deal boards without knots.

The public infatuation lasted till the 8th of September, when the South Sea stock began to fall, and some of the adventurers awoke from their delirium. The number of sellers now daily increased; on the 29th the stock had sunk to one hundred and fifty pounds; several eminent goldsmiths and bankers who had lent money, were obliged to stop payment and abscond; and the ebb of this portentous tide was so violent that it carried everything in its way, and an infinite number of families were overwhelmed with ruin. Public credit sustained a terrible shock; the nation was thrown into a dangerous ferment, and nothing was heard but the ravings of disappointment, grief, and despair.

Some of the principal members of the ministry were deeply concerned, and employed their interest with the

Bank of England to support the credit of the South Sea scheme. This, for a time, favoured the sale of the shares; and those who contrived it seized the opportunity to realise theirs.

On the bursting of the bubble, George I. was sent for from Hanover; parliament met, and bills were passed with the hopes of alleviation; one measure, which it was hoped would contribute to restore public credit, was the engrossment of nine millions of the capital stock of the South Sea Company into the capital of the Bank of England and East India Company.

Knight, the treasurer of the South Sea Company, withdrew from the kingdom; he was followed to the Continent, but escaped arrest. Secret committees of investigation were formed in the House of Commons, and they discovered a train of the deepest villany and fraud that was ever contrived to ruin a nation. The persons of the actors, directors, and principal officers, were consequently secured.

On inquiry, it appeared that large sums had been given to persons in the administration and House of Commons, for promoting the passing of the act, and a fictitious stock of five hundred and seventy-four thousand pounds had been disposed of by the directors to facilitate the passing of the bill, the greater part of which had been distributed amongst the directors.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer was expelled the house, and committed to the Tower: the evidence against him appeared so conclusive, that it was resolved, "that he had promoted the destructive execution of the South Sea scheme, with a view to his own exorbitant profit, and had combined with the directors in their pernicious practices, to the ruin of public credit." The estates of many of the directors, those

most implicated in the villany of the transactions, were confiscated for the benefit of the sufferers. The directors, in obedience to the orders of the house, delivered in inventories of them; a certain allowance from each estate being deducted for each director, according to his conduct and circumstances.

On the 11th of June, 1720, the king issued a proclamation relative to those projects named bubbles, which, for a few days, gave some check to that fatal traffic; yet, in the face of all authority, it soon revived, and even increased more than ever; and whilst the shares daily advanced every one was a gainer, so that the lower classes fell into luxury and prodigality, as well as others. From morning till evening purchasers applied in such crowds in 'Change-alley, as to choke up the thoroughfare; and such was the wild confusion in the multitude, that the same project or bubble was known to have been sold, at the same moment, ten per cent. higher at one end of the alley than the other.

The mania was so great at that time, that no fewer than two hundred and forty bubbles, of different descriptions, were blown by needy and knavish projectors; which shortly burst, and left *but* a wreck behind.

The government now determined to put them down; fatal writs of *scire facias* were issued on the 18th of August, and the crown lawyers were ordered strictly to prosecute all such as had opened books of subscription, and all who subscribed to them.

In the series of essays called the Guardian, Mr. Addison alludes to Steele's "Multiplication Table," a species of lottery which was proved illegal; further notice of it is to be found in No. 413 of the Spectator, in a letter addressed by Steele himself to Mr.

Addison, wherein he says, "this scheme of gain is called the multiplication table, and is so far calculated for the immediate service of her majesty, that the same person who is fortunate in the lottery of the state, may receive yet further advantages. The manner of executing the design is by giving out receipts for half-guineas received, which shall entitle the fortunate bearer to certain sums in the table, as is set forth at large in the proposal."

Soon after, Steele sent the following advertisement to a subsequent number of the Spectator: "Whereas the proposal called the Multiplication Table is under an information from the Attorney-General, in humble submission and duty to her majesty the said undertaking is laid down, and attendance is given at the office, in order to repay such sums as have been paid in the said table, without deduction."

In 1825, the general feeling was again led captive by the unreasonable hopes of speculation. In January of that year there existed no less than one hundred and twenty speculations, carried on, as it was termed, by companies, under the heads of Railroad Companies, Bank and Loan Companies, Gas Companies, British and Irish Mines' Companies, Foreign Companies, Ship and Dock Companies, and Miscellaneous Companies; which often consisted of only the projector and his clerk. Though great misery, and frequent ruin, were the undoubted consequences of these speculations, yet no such extensively disastrous results occurred as those which followed the infamous South Sea Bubble.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### ATTEMPT TO STEAL THE REGALIA FROM THE TOWER.

First Opening of the Regalia to Public Inspection—Edwards appointed Keeper—Plan formed by Blood to steal the Regalia—He visits the Tower with his pretended Wife—Means by which he contrived to become intimate with Edwards—His Arrangements for carrying his Scheme into Execution—He knocks down Edwards, and obtains Possession of the Jewels—Fortunate Chance by which his Scheme was frustrated—He is taken—Charles II. is present at his Examination—Blood contrives to obtain a Pardon, and the Gift of an Estate from the King.

BAYLEY, in his History of the Tower of London, has very circumstantially related the attempt made by a desperado, named Blood, to steal the regalia from thence: though it failed in the execution, this scheme was most ingeniously planned. The subsequent ingenuity of the culprit, on his examination before the king, also saved him from a just punishment, and not only procured him pardon for his offence, but even a handsome reward in the form of an annuity.

Soon after the appointment of Sir Giles Talbot to the office of Master of the Jewel-House in the Tower, the regalia first became the object of public inspection. The privilege of showing them was granted by Charles II. to the keeper, in consequence of certain reductions in the emoluments of the office. The person appointed to take charge of them was a confidential servant, named Talbot Edwards; and soon after, in 1673, the attempt of the notorious Blood was made.

Three weeks before the execution of his plan, Blood went to the Tower, in the canonical habit of a clergyman, accompanied by a woman whom he called his wife. They desired to see the regalia, and

just as their wishes had been gratified, the lady feigned indisposition; this circumstance called forth the kind offices of Mrs. Edwards, who courteously invited her into the dwelling-house. The lady, however, soon recovered, and, on departing, professed great gratitude.

A few days after this, Blood came again, bringing Mrs. Edwards four pair of white gloves, as a present from his pretended wife. This civility opened a way to a more intimate acquaintance, and, at length, Blood offered a proposal of marriage between his nephew, (whom he represented as possessing two hundred pounds per annum in land,) and Miss Edwards, if agreeable to all parties, on a longer acquaintance. A treaty was entered into, and the young gentleman was to come in a day or two to be presented.

At the time appointed, Blood went with three others to the Jewel-House, armed with rapier-blades in their canes, and every one had a dagger, and a brace of pistols. Two of the friends, to fill up the time whilst the daughter was adorning herself, expressed a wish to view the regalia before dinner, and it was arranged, that, together with Blood, they should accompany old Mr. Edwards for that purpose, whilst the anxious lover should wait below for the coming of his mistress, but in reality to watch lest interruption should take place. When the three had entered with Edwards into the room, a cloak was thrown over him, a gag was placed in his mouth, and he was threatened with death if he made the least noise; but, as he was not intimidated, and made attempts to sound an alarm, he was silenced by some blows on the head with a mallet, and a stab in the belly, when he lay as if dead.

They then proceeded to secrete the booty about

their persons. One of them, named Parrot, put the orb into his pocket, Blood held the crown under his cloak, and the third was about to file the sceptre into two pieces, to place it in a bag, when, fortunately, the son of Mr. Edwards visited his father, and, regardless of the opposition made by the watchful pretended lover, persisted to force his way in. The scuffle below was heard, and, this unexpected incident spreading confusion among them, they instantly decamped, leaving the sceptre undivided. The aged keeper, recovering, forced the gag from his mouth, and cried "Treason!" The alarm was given, and parties were sent to the several gates to stop them. They escaped, however, out at St. Catherine's gate, where horses were waiting for them, but were speedily overtaken. Under Blood's cloak was found the crown; and, even when a prisoner, he had the impudence to struggle for his prize, and said it was a gallant attempt, however unsuccessful, as it was for a crown.

In the struggle the great pearl, and a large diamond, with a few smaller jewels, were lost from the crown, but fortunately they were afterwards found and restored.

Blood being carried before Sir Gilbert Talbot, the king went to hear his examination and confession. This was a fortunate circumstance for the culprit, who artfully worked at once on the vanity and the apprehensions of the monarch. He told him that he had formerly been engaged with others to kill his majesty, while he was bathing at Battersea, and had concealed himself in the reeds to effect his purpose; but that when he had taken aim, the awe inspired by the royal presence unnerved his hand, and he desisted from his sanguinary design. He added, that he was but one

of three hundred, who were sworn to revenge each other's fall; that the king might do with him as he pleased, but that, by dooming him to suffer, he would endanger his own life, and the lives of his advisers; while, on the contrary, by displaying elemeney, he would win the gratitude and the serviees of a band of fearless and faithful followers. Either won over by the boldness and eandour of the ruffian, or alarmed by his threats, Charles not only pardoned Blood, but likewise gave him an estate in Ireland, worth 500*l.* a year. Poor Edwards (who suffered severely from his injuries) was less fortunate; he had only a grant of two hundred pounds, and his son one hundred, and even of these trifling sums the payment was so long deferred, that they were obliged to sell the orders at half-price for ready money.

---

## CHAPTER XX.

### VAMPYRISM.

Horrible nature of the Superstition of Vampyrism—Persons attacked by Vampyres become Vampyres themselves—Signs by which a Vampyre was known—Origin of one of the signs—Effect attributed to Excommunication in the Greek church—Story of an excommunicated Greek—Calmet's theory of the origin of the Superstition respecting Vampyres—St. Stanislas—Philinnium—The Strygis supposed to have given the idea of the Vampyre—Capitulary of Charlemagne—Remedy against attacks from the Demon—Anecdote of an impudent Vampyre—Story of a Vampyre at Mycone—Prevalence of Vampyrism in the north of Europe—Walachian mode of detecting Vampyres.

Among the many superstitions which have terrified and degraded mankind, that which has received the name of Vampyrism is, perhaps, the most horrible and loathsome. The Vampyre, or Blood-sucker, has

been forcibly described as "a corporeal creature of blood and unquenchable blood-thirst,—a ravenous corpse, who rises in body and soul from his grave, for the sole purpose of glutting his sanguinary appetite with the life-blood of those whose blood stagnates in his own veins. He is endowed with an incorruptible frame to prey on the lives of his kindred and his friends—he re-appears among them from the world of the tomb, not to tell its secrets of joy or of woe, not to invite or to warn by the testimony of his experience, but to appal and assassinate those who were dearest to him on earth—and this, not for the gratification of revenge or any *human* feeling, which, however depraved, might find something in common with human nature; but to banquet a monstrous thirst, acquired in the tomb, and which, though he walks in human form and human lineaments, has swallowed up every human motive in its brutal ferocity."

It is manifest that a being of this kind must be infinitely more terrible than the common race of ghosts, spectres, and fiendish visitants. But there was another circumstance which inexpressibly heightened the horror excited by the dread of being attacked. Wasting illness, closed by death, was not all that the victim had to endure. He who was sucked by a Vampyre was doomed to become in his turn a member of the hideous community, and to inflict on others, even on those who were nearest and dearest to him, the same evils by which he had himself suffered and perished.

When a grave was opened in order to search for one of these pests, to put a stop to his career, the sanguinary offender was recognised by the corpse being fresh and well preserved, the eyes open or half

closed, the face of a vermilion hue, the limbs flexible, the hair and nails long, and the pulse beating.

The idea of this unchanged state of the corpse seems to have originated from a superstition of the Greek church. It was believed that excommunication, inflicted by the Greek priests, had the power of preventing the lifeless remains of the excommunicated person from sinking into decay. An instance of this effect being produced is mentioned by Ricaut, in his History of the Greek Church. A young man, of Milos, who had been put under the ecclesiastical ban, was buried in a remote and unconsecrated ground. He became a Vampyre, or, as the modern Greeks term it, a Vroucolaca. The corpse was disinterred, and displayed all the signs of Vampyrism. The priests were about to treat it as was usual in such cases; but the friends of the deceased solicited and obtained a cessation of hostilities, till a messenger could be sent to Constantinople, to pray for absolution from the Patriarch. The corpse, meanwhile, was placed in the church, and masses were daily and nightly said. One day, while the priest was reading the service, a crash was heard from the coffin; the lid was opened, and the body was found as entirely decayed as though it had been buried for seven years. When the messenger arrived with the absolution, it was ascertained that the Patriarch had affixed his signature to it at the exact moment when the crash was heard in the coffin.

The superstition relative to Vampyres is supposed by Calmet to be derived from ancient legends. The first of these legends is the story of St. Stanislas raising a man, who had been dead three years, and whom he called to life that he might give evidence, in the saint's behalf, in a court of justice. After having

given his testimony, the resuscitated man returned quietly to his grave. A second is to be found in Phlegon de Mirabilibus, who relates that a girl of the name of Philinnium, a native of Tralles, in Asia Minor, not only visited, ate, and drank with her lover, after her death, but even cohabited with him. But in neither of these cases do we find a trace of the diabolical malignity which characterises the Vampyre. A more congenial origin may perhaps be found in the Strygis, of which Ovid makes mention; and this origin appears the more probable when we consider that, in the middle ages, the Strygis had an established place among the demon tribe; and, in the shape of suspected males and females, was often burnt, among other sorcerers and magicians, by the Lombards and Germans. There is extant a capitulary of Charlemagne, which shows how prevalent the belief was in the existence of the Strygis, and how strong a resemblance the fiend bore to the Vampyre of modern times. It enacts that "if any person, deceived by the devil, shall believe, after the manner of the Pagans, that any man or woman was a Strygis, or Stryx, and was given to eat men, and for this cause should burn such person, or should give such person's flesh to be eaten, or should eat such flesh, such man or woman should be capitally punished."

From the capitulary it is clear, that eating the flesh of the delinquent Stryx was supposed to be a remedy for the evils which the demon inflicted. There is a somewhat similar circumstance connected with the Vampyre, which strengthens the idea that it is a legitimate descendant of the Stryx. In a French work, published nearly a century and a half ago, is an account of the Upiers or Vampyres, which infested Poland and Russia. "They appear," says the

author, "from mid-day to midnight, and suck the blood of men and beasts in such abundance, that it often issues again out of their mouth, nose, and ears; and the corpse sometimes is found swimming in the blood with which its cere-cloth is filled. This Redivive, or Upier (or some demon in his form), rises from the tombs, goes by night to hug and squeeze violently his relations or friends, and sucks their blood, so as to weaken and exhaust them, and at length occasion their death. This persecution is not confined to a single person, but extends throughout the family, unless it is arrested by cutting off the head, or opening the heart, of the Upier, which they find in its cere-cloth, soft, flexible, tumid, and ruddy, although long ago dead. A large quantity of blood commonly flows from the body, *which some mix up with flour and make bread of it; and this bread, when eaten, is found to preserve them from the vexation of the spectre.*" It is singular, however, that though the Vampyre himself might thus be rendered edible, he was imagined to communicate an infectious quality to whatever he fed on; so that, if any one were unlucky enough to eat the flesh of cattle which had been sucked, he would, after death, be sure of becoming a member of the blood-sucking fraternity.

In one part of his statement this author is incorrect. Vampyres were not to be so easily got rid of as he imagined. Nothing short of burning would, at least in a majority of cases, put an end to their diabolical visitations. Some of them had the audacity to make a jest of driving a stake through them. Of this class was a peasant of the village of Blow, in Bohemia, who had long been most mischievously active. "At last they dug him up, and drove a stake through him, during which he had the impudence to

laugh and jeer at his executioners, and thank them for giving him a stick to defend himself against the dogs. This procedure did not answer at all. He became still more troublesome than ever. Then they delivered him over to the hangman, who placed him in a cart, to carry him out of the village and burn him. But in this new situation he kicked and struggled like a man in a frenzy, and, when they again drove stakes into him, uttered loud shrieks, and gave a large quantity of fine healthy blood. At last they burnt him: and the village at the moment ceased to be infested as before."

The belief in Vampyrism prevailed in Greece; where, as we have already stated, the demon was known by the name of Vroucolaca, or Broucoeolas. Tournefort relates an amusing story of one that woefully annoyed the inhabitants of Myeone. Prayers, processions, stabbing with swords, sprinklings of holy water, and even pouring it in large doses down the throat of the refractory Vroncolaea, were all tried in vain. An Albanian, who chanced to be at Mycone, objected to two of these remedies. It was no wonder that the devil continued in, he said, for how could he possibly come through the holy water! and as to the swords, they were equally effectual in preventing his exit; for, their handles being crosses, he was so much terrified that he dared not pass them. To obviate the latter objection, he recommended that Turkish scymetars should be used. The scymetars were accordingly put in requisition, but the pertinacious devil still retained his hold of the corpse, and played his pranks with as much vigour as ever. At length, when all the respectable inhabitants were packing up, to take flight to Syra or Tinos, an effectual mode of ousting the Vroncolaca was fortunately suggested. The body

was committed to the flames, on the first of January, 1701, and the spirit, being thus forcibly ejected from his abode, was rendered incapable of doing farther mischief. He, however, left behind him a legacy of vexation to the Myconians; for, as a punishment for having had doings with the evil one, a fine was imposed upon them by the Turks, when they next visited the island to receive the capitation-tax.

But though Vampyrism was known in Greece, it was far more prevalent in Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Poland, Hungary, and Walachia. In those countries it raged particularly from 1725 to 1735. There was scarcely a village that was not said to be haunted by one of the blood-sucking demons; and the greatest part of the population was a prey to terror. The belief was not confined to the vulgar; all classes participated in it; military and ecclesiastical commissions were appointed to investigate the facts; and the press teemed with dissertations and narratives from the pens of erudite individuals, whose learning was at least equalled by their inveterate credulity.

In the mode which was employed by the Walachians for the detection of Vampyres, there is a touch of the romantic. On a jet black horse, which had never approached the female, they mounted a young boy, and made them pass up and down in the churchyard by all the graves; and wherever the animal refused to proceed, they concluded that particular grave to be inhabited by a vampyre. "They then open it," says the narrator, "and find within it a corpse equally fat and fair as a man who is quietly sleeping." By cutting off the head, and filling up the trench, all danger was removed, and those who had been attacked were gradually restored to their strength and faculties.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### JUGGLING.

Feats of Jugglers formerly attributed to Witchcraft—Extract from Ady's Candle in the Dark—Anglo-Saxon Gleemen—Norman Jugglers or Tregetours—Chaucer's Description of the Wonders performed by them—Means probably employed by them—Recipe for making the Appearance of a Flood—Jugglers fashionable in the Reign of Charles II.—Evelyn's Account of a Fire-eater—Katterfelto—Superiority of Asiatic and Egyptian pretenders to magical Skill—Mandeville's Account of Juggling at the Court of the Great Khan—Extraordinary Feats witnessed by the Emperor Jehanguire—Ibn Batuta's Account of Hindustance Jugglers—Account of a Bramin who sat upon the Air—Egyptian Jugglers—Mr. Lane's Account of the Performance of one of them—Another fails in satisfying Captain Scott.

The mountebanks who now exhibit on the travelling stage or cart, and whose buffoonery pleases only the clown, were formerly thought to practise witchcraft, or deal with some unlawful powers. One Thomas Ady censures them severely, in a book which he published in the year 1656, called "A Candle in the Dark, against Witches and Witchcraft." In this book he says, "The craft of Juggling, to them that are not acquainted with it, breeds great admiration in the beholders, and seemeth to silly people to be miraculous, and yet, being known, is but deceit and roguery, so that the beholder cannot but blush and be ashamed to think he was so easily cozened, and did so much admire a ridiculous imposture. I will speak of one more excelling in the craft than others, that went about in King James his time, who called himself the King's most excellent Hocus Pocus, because that, at the playing of every trick, he used to say, 'Hocus pocus tont us talontus vade celeriter jubeo,' a dark composure of words, to blind the eyes of the beholders,

to make every trick pass the more currently, without discovery; because, when the eye and ear are both earnestly busied, the trick is not so easily discovered, nor the imposture discerned. The going about of this fellow was very useful," continues Mr. Ady, "to the wise, to see how the people among the heathen were deceived in times and places of ignorance; as Pharaoh and his servants were imposed upon by magicians, and the Samaritans by Simon the sorcerer, 'to whom all gave heed.'"

But, however disparagingly Mr. Ady may speak of the art of juggling, it is impossible to deny that many of the professors of it have been men of great cleverness. Even the commonest of the tricks to which he alludes continued for ages to amuse and astonish the people. The trick of throwing several balls and knives into the air, and regularly catching and returning them, is as old as the time of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors. In Strutt's Sports and Pastimes of the People of England, there is a representation of "a gleeman," or merry-maker, keeping up and catching three knives and three balls.

But the joculators, jugglours, or tregatours, of the Normans, were men of much higher pretensions than the gleemen. Some of the delusions which they practised could not have been performed without considerable scientific knowledge. We have the authority of Chaucer for the fact, that they "cheated the eyes with blear illusion," in a manner which may excuse ignorant spectators for having attributed the effect to supernatural means. "In a large hall they will," says he, "produce water with boats rowed up and down upon it. Sometimes they will bring in the similitude of a grim lion, or make flowers spring up in a meadow; sometimes they cause a vine to

flourish, bearing white and red grapes; or show a castle built with stone, and when they please they cause the whole to disappear." He tells us, too, of a "learned clerk, who showed to a friend forests filled with wild deer, where he saw an hundred of them slain, some with hounds and some with arrows; the hunting being finished, a company of falconers appeared upon the banks of a fair river, where the birds pursued the herons and slew them. He then saw knights jousting upon a plain," and, which was a more attractive sight, "the resemblance of his beloved lady dancing, which occasioned him to dance also." But when "the maister that this magike wrought thought fit, he clapped his hands together, and all was gone in an instante." Another feat, which he describes as having himself witnessed, is still more striking:

> "There saw I Coll Tregetour,
> Upon a table of sycamour,
> Play an uncouth thing to tell;
> I saw him cary a wynde mell
> Under a walnote shale."

It is probable that the deceptive effect was produced by the magic lantern, and the concave mirror. With respect to the method "to make the appearance of a flode of water to come into a house," the following recipe has been gravely handed down to us from our ancestors:—steep a thread in the liquor produced from snakes' eggs bruised, and hang it up over a bason of water in the place where the trick is to be performed. Recipes of this kind were perhaps meant to mislead those who wished to penetrate the mystery.

In the reign of Charles the Second, jugglers appear to have been in much repute with the great. In the "Diary" of Evelyn, under the date of Oct. 8,

1672, we find the following notice: "I tooke my leave of my Lady Sunderland; she made me stay dinner at Leicester House, and afterwards sent for Richardson, the famous fire-eater. He melted a beer-glass, and eat it quite up; then, taking a live coal on his tongue, he put on it a raw oyster; the coal was blown on with bellows, till it flamed and sparkled in his mouth, and so remained, till the oyster gasped and was quite boiled; then he melted pitch and wax with sulphur, which he drank down as it flamed; I saw it flaming in his mouth a good while. He also took up a thick piece of iron, like an ironing heater, and, when fiery hot, held it between his teeth, then in his hand, and threw it about like a stone; but this, I believe, he cared not to hold very long." Lady Sunderland seemed fond of such exhibitions, as Mr. Evelyn recounts on another occasion, that "dining with Lady Sunderland, I saw a fellow swallow a knife, and divers great pebble stones, which could make a plain rattling one against another; the knife was in sheath of horn."

Katterfelto, described by Cowper, as

> "With his hair on end, at his own wonders
> Wondering for his bread,"

was a compound of conjuror and quack-doctor, and seems at one time to have enjoyed a great repute in his way. He practised on the people of London, during the influenza of the year 1782, and added to his nostrums the fascination of hocus-pocus. Among other philosophical apparatus, he employed the services of some extraordinary black cats, with which he astonished the ignorant, and confounded the vulgar. He was not so successful out of London; as he was committed, by the Mayor of Shrews-

bury, to the common house of correction, as a vagrant and impostor.

But, though European jugglers have manifested great skill in the various branches of their art, they appear to be far exceeded by those of other parts of the world. Clavigero describes many of the performances of Mexican professors; and adds that "the first Spaniards who were witnesses of these and other exhibitions of the Mexicans were so much astonished at their agility, that they suspected some supernatural power assisted them."

It is, however, in the Asiatic and African quarters of the globe that the art of deluding the eye by false presentments is to be found in its perfection. Sir John Mandeville gives an account of an exhibition which took place before the Great Khan; "And be it done by craft, or by nicromancy," says he, "I wot not." That, in an unenlightened age, he should doubt whether "nicromancy" had not something to do with such wonders is not astonishing. "They make," he tells us, "the appearance of the sun and the moon in the air; and then they make the night so dark, that nothing can be seen; and again they restore the daylight, and the sun shining brightly. Then they bring in dances of the fairest damsels of the world, and the richest arrayed. Afterwards they make other damsels to come in, bringing cups of gold, full of the milk of divers animals, and give drink to the lords and ladies; and then they make knights joust in arms full lustily, who run together, and in the encounter break their spears so rudely, that the splinters fly all about the hall. They also bring in a hunting of the hart and of the boar, with hounds running at them open-mouthed; and many other things they do

by the craft of their enchantments that are marvellous to see."

Mandeville has the reputation, not justly, in every instance, of being such "a measureless liar," that his evidence in this case may, perhaps, excite incredulity; but we must hesitate to disbelieve the old traveller, when we find that similar, or even greater, wonders are attested by an unexceptionable witness, no less a personage than Jehanguire, the Emperor of Hindustan. In his Autobiography, that monarch enumerates no less than twenty-eight tricks, which were played by Bengalee jugglers before him and his court, and at which he expresses, as well he might, the utmost astonishment. One of them, that of cutting a man in pieces, and then producing him alive and perfect, resembles a trick which Ibn Batuta saw long before in China. Another was the putting of seeds of curious trees into the earth, which speedily grew to the height of two or three feet, and bore fruit. This was repeated at Madras, not many years ago, on the lawn before the Government-house. A mango stone was put into the ground, which, to all appearance, rapidly sprung up into a fruit-bearing tree. Another of the tricks exhibited before the emperor is equally marvellous: "They produced a chain fifty cubits in length, and in my presence threw one end of it towards the sky, where it remained, as if fastened to something in the air. A dog was then brought forward, and, being placed at the lower end of the chain, immediately ran up, and, reaching the other end, immediately disappeared in the air. In the same manner a hog, a panther, a lion, and a tiger, were alternately sent up the chain, and all equally disappeared at the upper end of the chain. At last, they took down the chain and put it into a bag, no

one ever discerning in what way the different animals were made to vanish into the air, in the mysterious manner above described. This, I may venture to affirm, was beyond measure strange and surprising."

Ibn Batuta (the celebrated traveller, who has been called the Mahometan Marco Polo of the fourteenth century), to whom a reference has already been made, narrates delusions of the same kind, of which he was an eye-witness. He informs us that, when he was once in the presence of the Emperor of Hindustan, two Yogees came in, whom the monarch desired to show him what he had never yet seen. They said, "'We will.' One of them then assumed the form of a cube, and arose from the earth, and, in this cubic shape, he occupied a place in the air over our heads. I was so much astonished and terrified at this, that I fainted and fell to the earth. The emperor then ordered me some medicine which he had with him, and, upon taking this, I recovered and sat up; this cubic figure still remaining in the air just as it had been. His companion then took a sandal, belonging to one of those who had come out with him, and struck it upon the ground as if he had been angry. The sandal then ascended until it became opposite in situation with the cube. It then struck it upon the neck, and the cube gradually descended to the earth, and at last rested in the place it had left. The emperor then told me that the man who took the form of a cube was a disciple to the owner of the sandal. 'And,' continued he, 'had I not entertained fears for the safety of thy intellect, I should have ordered him to show thee greater things than these.' From this, however, I took a palpitation of the heart, until the emperor ordered me a medicine, which restored me."

It is not more than seven years since a Brahmin

died at Madras, who was accustomed to perform apparently the difficult feat of sitting on the air. He did not exhibit for money, but merely as an act of courtesy. Forty minutes is said to have been the longest time that he ever remained in this extraordinary situation; the usual time seems to have been about twelve minutes. An eye-witness thus describes the act and the preparation for it: "The only apparatus seen is a piece of plank, which, with four pegs, he forms into a kind of long stool; upon this, in a little brass saucer or socket, he places, in a perpendicular position, a hollow bamboo, over which he puts a kind of crutch, like that of a walking-crutch, covering that with a piece of common hide; these materials he carries with him in a little bag, which is shown to those who come to see him exhibit. The servants of the house hold a blanket before him, and, when it is withdrawn, he is discovered poised in the air, about four feet from the ground, in a sitting attitude, the outer edge of one hand merely touching the crutch; the fingers of that hand deliberately counting beads; the other hand and arm held up in an erect posture. The blanket was then held up before him, and they heard a gurgling noise, like that occasioned by wind escaping from a bladder or tube, and, when the screen was withdrawn, he was again standing on *terra firma*. The same man has the power of staying under water for several hours. He declines to explain how he does it, merely saying he has been long accustomed to do so."

The Bramin died without communicating his secret, and though attempts were made to explain it, none of them were satisfactory. It was asserted by a native that it is treated of in the Shasters, and depends upon the art of fully suppressing the breath, and of cleans-

ing the tubular organs of the body, joined to a peculiar mode of drawing, retaining, and ejecting the breath—an explanation which leaves the mystery as dark as ever.

Egypt, which, more than thirty centuries ago, produced men so confident of their magical skill as to venture to emulate the miracles of Moses, still has pretenders to preternatural powers. The modern magicians seem by no means to be a degenerate race. One of their modes of delusion is, "the magic mirror of ink," and the address with which they manage the trick is really wonderful, and, indeed, inexplicable. It is performed by pouring ink into the hand of a boy not arrived at puberty, an unmarried woman, or a woman who is "as ladies wish to be who love their lords." The boy is told to look into the ink, and to say what he sees. Mr. Lane, in his recent valuable work on Egypt, has described the operation, and he declares his utter inability to account for the result. "After some preliminary ceremonies had been gone through, the magician," says he, "addressed himself to me, and asked me if I wished the boy to see any person who was absent or dead. I named Lord Nelson, of whom the boy had evidently never heard; for it was with much difficulty he pronounced the name, after several trials. The magician desired the boy to say to the Sooltan, 'My master salutes thee, and desires thee to bring Lord Nelson: bring him before my eyes, that I may see him, speedily.' The boy then said so; and almost immediately added, 'A messenger is gone, and has returned, and has brought a man, dressed in a black* suit of European clothes: the man has lost his left arm.' He then paused for a moment or two,

* Dark blue is called, by the modern Egyptians, *esmed*, which properly signifies *black*, and is therefore so translated here.

and, looking more intently and more closely into the ink, he said, 'No, he has not lost his left arm, but it is placed to his breast.' This correction made his description more striking than it had been without it; since Lord Nelson generally had his empty sleeve attached to his coat: but it was the *right* arm that he had lost. Without saying that I suspected the boy had made a mistake, I asked the magician whether the objects appeared in the ink as if actually before the eyes, or as if in a glass, which makes the right appear left. He answered, that they appeared as in a mirror. This rendered the boy's description faultless." Mr. Lane adds, "A short time since, after performing in the usual manner, by means of a boy, he prepared the magic mirror in the hand of a young English lady, who, on looking into it for a little while, said that she saw a broom sweeping the ground without anybody holding it, and was so much frightened that she would look no longer." To make this appearance understood, it must be mentioned, that the first thing seen in the mirror is the sweeping of the ground by a broom. In the case of Lord Nelson, however, the broom was in the hands of a man. The boy is said not to have been a confederate of the magician.

The same experiment was tried, at another time, in the presence of Captain Scott; but, in this instance, the conjuror seems to have been less of a proficient in his trade than the one who was employed by Mr. Lane, and the result was unsatisfactory to the captain.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### PRODIGIES.

Hold taken on the public Mind by Prodigies—Dutch Boy with Hebrew Words on the Iris of each Eye—Boy with the word Napoleon in the Eye—Child with a Golden Tooth—Speculations on the subject—Superstition respecting changeling Children in the Isle of Man—Waldron's Description of a Changeling—Cases of extraordinary Sleepers—The Seven Sleepers of Ephesus—Men supposed, in the northern Regions, to be frozen during the Winter, and afterwards thawed into Life again—Dr. Oliver's Case of a Sleeper near Bath—Dr. Cheyne's Account of Colonel Townshend's power of voluntarily suspending Animation—Man buried alive for a Month at Jaisulmer—The Manner of his Burial, and his Preparation for it.

PRODIGIES of every kind, moral or physical, have ever taken hold of the imagination of the public, nor has the better education of some prevented them from lending a greedy ear to accounts of such phenomena, and the belief of the vulgar has thus been sanctioned and strengthened. Many, from interested speculation, have pretended to undergo most extraordinary privations, or to be independent of the established laws of nature; such impostures met with a very flattering reception in the earlier part of the eighteenth century.

Mr. Evelyn mentions a Dutch boy, eight or nine years old, who was carried about by his parents as a show. He had about the iris of one eye the words Deus meus, and about the other Eloihim, in the Hebrew characters. How this was done by artifice none could imagine, and his parents affirmed he was born so. Three years before this period, in 1699, Mr. C. Ellis wrote to Dr. Edw. Tyson, that he had seen the Friesland boy, "round the pupils of whose eyes, they pretend, are naturally engraved the above

words. This is looked upon as a prodigious miracle in these parts, but, upon more nicely surveying it, I could perceive it was only the iris not circularly joined, but lashed into fimbriæ, which might be thought to form imaginary letters; there is something like D. J. and V., but not a footstep for the strongest fancy to work out any more. But it was like to have been of danger to me to have discovered this trick; for acquainting a gentleman in English of this cheat, one of the mob happened to understand it, and I was forced to make the best of my way." It is hardly three years since a lad was exhibited in London, who is said to have had "Napoleon," in distinct letters written in his eye. There is little doubt, if this was really the case, but it was the result of artificial, rather than natural, causes.

The eyes are not the only part of the head in which miraculous appearances have been supposed to be manifested. In 1593, it was reported that a child of seven years old, in Silesia, having shed its teeth, a double tooth had been replaced by one of gold. This phenomenon soon brought a number of learned men into the field, to dissertate upon the wonder. Horst, more generally known under his Latinized name of Horstius, who was a professor of medicine, and really a man of abilities, wrote in raptures upon the subject. According to his idea, the production of the tooth was partly a natural, and partly a miraculous event, and was intended by Heaven to console the Christians for the perils to which they were exposed from the Turks. How consolation was to be derived from such a source, it would not be easy to discover. Horst was followed by Martin Ruland, another physician, who published a treatise called "Nova et omni

Memoriâ omnino inaudita Hist. de Aureo Dente," &c. Two years after Ruland had given his tract to the world, the opinions which it broached were controverted by Ingesteterus; and were immediately defended, in another dissertation, by Ruland. Lastly, the pen was taken up by Libavius, an eminent chemist and physician, the first proposer of the transfusion of blood. Unhappily, all this labour and erudition were thrown away. Some one had, at last, the good sense to institute an inquiry as to the reality of the miracle; and to the great discomfort of the literary and non-literary believers, it was discovered that the tooth was gilt.

Waldron, in his Description of the Isle of Man, says, "The old story of infants being changed in their cradles is here in such credit, that mothers are in continual terror at the thoughts of it. I was prevailed on," says he, "to go and see a child, who, as they told me, was one of these changelings, and indeed I must own I was not a little surprised and shocked at the sight. Nothing under heaven could have a more beautiful face; though between five and six years old, and seemingly healthy, he was so far from being able to walk, that he could not so much as move a joint; his limbs were vastly long for his age, but smaller than an infant's of six months; his complexion perfectly delicate, and he had the finest hair in the world. He never spoke or cried, ate scarce anything, and was very seldom seen to smile; but if any one called him fairy elf he would frown, and fix his eyes so earnestly on those who had said it, as if he would look them through. His mother, or supposed mother, being poor, frequently went out a-charing, and left home a whole day together; the neighbours, out of curiosity, have often looked in at

the window to see how he behaved alone, which whenever they did, they were sure to find him laughing and in the utmost delight. This made them judge that he was not without company more pleasing to him than any mortal; and what made this seem more reasonable was, that if he was left ever so dirty, the woman, at her return, saw him with a clean face, and hair combed with the utmost exactness."

Instances have been often recorded of extraordinary sleepers, which, supposing them to have been true, have puzzled physiologists to account for. So many eccentricities in the animal economy have been proved by a careful investigation to be impostures, that it is but natural to suppose them all to have been feigned, to accomplish some particular purpose.

The popular tale of the Seven Sleepers has had a most extended circulation, and, as a divine revelation, was extensively believed among the Mahometans. When the emperor Decius persecuted the Christians, seven noble youths of Ephesus concealed themselves in a spacious cavern, the entrance to which the tyrant ordered should be firmly secured with a pile of stones. They immediately fell into a deep slumber, which was miraculously prolonged, without injuring the powers of life, during a period of one hundred and eighty-seven years. After this slumber, as they thought, of a few hours, they were pressed by the calls of hunger, and it was resolved that Jamblichus, one of them, should secretly return to the city for bread. The *youth* could hardly recognise his native city, and, to his surprise, a large cross was triumphantly erected over the principal gate of Ephesus. His singular dress and obsolete language confounded the baker, to whom he offered an ancient medal of

Decius, as the current coin of the empire. Taken up on suspicion, he found that two centuries had nearly elapsed since his escape from the tyrant. The bishop of Ephesus, the clergy, and others, hastened to visit the cave of the seven sleepers, who bestowed their benediction, and peaceably expired.

Arguing from analogy, it was supposed that the inhabitants of the colder regions hybernated, as certain smaller animals are known to do. Baron Herberstein, in his Commentaries on Russian History, asserts, that there are in the northern parts of Muscovy, near the river Oby, on the borders of Tartary, a people he calls Leucomori, who sleep from the 27th day of November till the 23d of April, like tortoises, under ground, and then come to life again, though quite frozen all the winter. This gentleman was a creditable sort of person, and twice ambassador in Russia, from Ferdinand the emperor. It is most likely, however, that, in points of this nature he was contented to rely on the reports of others.

Dr. Oliver has given to the world "a relation of an extraordinary sleeping person, at Finsbury, near Bath;" the truth of which he seemed not to doubt. Samuel Chilton, in May, 1694, fell into a profound sleep, out of which no art could rouse him, till after a month's time: during this time, food and drink were put before him, which always disappeared, though no one ever saw him eat or drink.

Two years afterwards, he slept seventeen weeks, and in the following year for five months, with only one intermission for a few minutes. It does not appear, from the relation, that there was reason to suspect any imposture; yet it was rather remarkable that the stimulus of hunger should have induced him, though asleep, to eat and drink whatever was put

before him, and yet the most powerful stimuli applied in other forms should have made no impression upon him.

This protracted sleep, strange as it is, does not, however, appear so wonderful as the power of voluntarily suspending animation, and returning to life, after a considerable time has elapsed. A remarkable case of this kind is recorded by the celebrated Doctor Cheyne, in his "English Malady." The patient was a Colonel Townshend, "a man of great honour and integrity," who had long been suffering under an acute nephritic disorder, attended with constant vomitings, which made life a burden to him. Early one morning, he sent for his two physicians, Dr. Cheyne and Dr. Baynard; they went, accompanied by Mr. Skrine, his apothecary, and found his senses clear, and his mind perfectly collected. He had, he said, sent for them that they might give him "some account of an odd sensation which he had for some time observed and felt in himself, which was, that composing himself, he could die or expire when he pleased, and yet, by an effort, or somehow, he could come to life again, which (says Cheyne) it seems he had sometimes tried before he had sent for us."

The physicians were naturally surprised at this communication, and reluctant to believe a fact which was seemingly so improbable. Yet they hesitated to allow of his making the experiment before them, lest, in his debilitated state, he might carry it too far. He, however, insisted so strongly on their seeing the trial made, that they at last consented. "We all three," says Cheyne, "felt his pulse first; it was distinct, though small and thready; and his heart had its usual beating. He composed himself on his back, and lay in a still position some time; while I held his

right hand, Dr. Baynard laid his hand on his heart, and Mr. Skrine held a clean looking-glass to his mouth. I found his pulse sink gradually, till at last I could not feel any by the most exact and nice touch. Dr. Baynard could not find the least motion in his heart, nor Mr. Skrine the least soil of breath on the bright mirror which he held to his mouth; then each of us by turns examined his arm, heart, and breath, but could not, by the nicest scrutiny, discover the least symptom of life in him. We reasoned a long time about this odd appearance as well as we could, and all of us judging it inexplicable and unaccountable, we began to conclude that he had indeed carried the experiment too far, and at last were satisfied he was actually dead, and were just ready to leave him. This continued about half an hour, by nine o'clock in the morning, in autumn. As we were going away we observed some motion about the body, and, upon examination, found his pulse and the motion of his heart gradually returning: he began to breathe gently, and speak softly; we were all astonished to the last degree of astonishment at this unexpected change, and after some farther conversation with him, and among ourselves, went away fully satisfied as to all the particulars of this fact, but confounded and puzzled, and not able to form any rational scheme that might account for it. He afterwards called for his attorney, added a codicil to his will, settled legacies on his servants, received the sacrament, and calmly and composedly expired about six o'clock that evening.

A case of voluntary death and resuscitation, still more remarkable, because the individual by whom the act was performed was buried alive, and remained for a month in his tomb, has recently occurred in

India. The fact appears to be authenticated by unexceptionable evidence. The account is given in a letter, by Lieutenant A. H. Boileau, an officer of engineers, who is employed on the extensive trigonometrical survey of India. "I have (says he) just witnessed a singular circumstance, of which I had heard during our stay at this place, but said nothing about it before, the time for its accomplishment not being completed. This morning, however, the full month was over, and a man who had been buried all that time, on the bank of a tank near our camp, was dug out alive, in the presence of Esur-Lal, one of the ministers of the Muhar-wull of Jaisulmer, on whose account this singular individual was voluntarily interred a month ago.

"The man is said, by long practice, to have acquired the art of holding his breath by shutting the mouth, and stopping the interior opening of the nostrils with his tongue; he also abstains from solid food for some days previous to his interment, so that he may not be inconvenienced by the contents of his stomach, while put up in his narrow grave; and, moreover, he is sown up in a bag of cloth, and the cell is lined with masonry and floored with cloth, that the white ants and other insects may not easily be able to molest him. The place in which he was buried at Jaisulmer is a small building about twelve feet by eight, built of stone; and in the floor was a hole about three feet long, two and a half feet wide, and the same depth, or perhaps a yard deep, in which he was placed in a sitting posture, sewed up in his shroud, with his feet turned inwards towards the stomach, and his hands also pointed inwards towards the chest. Two heavy slabs of stone, five or six feet long, several inches thick, and broad enough to cover

the mouth of the grave, so that he could not escape, were then placed over him, and I believe a little earth was plastered over the whole, so as to make the surface of the grave smooth and compact. The door of the house was also built up, and people placed outside, that no tricks might be played nor deception practised. At the expiration of a full month, that is to say, this morning, the walling of the door was broken, and the buried man dug out of the grave; Trevelyan's moonshee only running there in time to see the ripping open of the bag in which the man had been enclosed. He was taken out in a perfectly senseless state, his eyes closed, his hands cramped and powerless, his stomach shrunk very much, and his teeth jammed so fast together, that they were forced to open his mouth with an iron instrument to pour a little water down his throat. He gradually recovered his senses and the use of his limbs; and when we went to see him was sitting up, supported by two men, and conversed with us in a low, gentle tone of voice, saying that 'we might bury him again for a twelvemonth, if we pleased.'"

That his powers of abstinence are great, there can be no doubt; as Cornet Macnaghten once suspended him for thirteen days, shut up in a wooden box. During the time that he is buried, his hair ceases to grow. Previously to his being buried he lives entirely upon milk, regulating the quantity in such a manner as to be just sufficient for sustaining life. After his release, and on his first taking food, he is said to feel some anxiety, till he has ascertained that the faculties of his stomach and bowels are not injured.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### BOTANICAL SUPERSTITIONS AND DELUSIONS.

Botanical Absurdities numerous—Shepherds study the Nature of Plants—The Doctrine of Signatures described—Supposed Qualities of Plants, according to that doctrine—Maidenhair, Quinces, Balm, Woodsorrel, Walnut—The Shamrock, an Emblem of the Trinity—Method of gathering and digging up Plants—Veneration in which the Misletoe was held—Fern-seed rendered the Bearer invisible—The Enchanter's Nightshade—The Mandrake—Mode of obtaining it—The Mandrake mentioned in Genesis—Pliny's Mention of it—The Root counterfeited by means of the Briony Root—Its soporific Virtues—The Tartarian Lamb, or Barometz, described—Poetical Descriptions of it by De la Croix and Darwin—Holy Trees—Early-budding Oaks in the New Forest—Glastonbury Thorn—Miraculous Walnut Tree at Glastonbury—Early Blackthorn at Quainton—The Groaning Tree at Badesly—Hazel used for the Divining Rod—Vindication of the Belief in the Divining Rod—Various Superstitions respecting Trees and Plants—The Peridexion.

THERE is, perhaps, no branch of natural history, that has been more fruitful in superstitious fears and observances, or that has longer been an object of attention to the inquiring eye of philosophy, than botany; and in times of ignorance this science harvested a full crop of absurdities. Much good as well as much evil has been attributed, in all ages, and by all nations, to the supernatural agency supposed to reside in certain roots or plants. As the Arabians living in the desert, from the uninterrupted view of the heavens, became great proficients in astronomy, and, by the eternal and unvarying celestial compass traversed the pathless sands, so, in like manner, shepherds, the earliest inhabitants of most countries,

employed the leisure of a pastoral life, in studying the natures and properties of plants; and, doubtless, often amused themselves in filling up the outline of their botanical systems with the help of imagination.

Thus the doctrine of signatures was invented, without any sufficient reason, but that it pleased them to imagine that a fancied resemblance in the shape of the root, leaf, or fruit of any plant, to any particular part of the human body, must indicate its possessing some beneficial or hurtful power, over such corresponding part. For example, a decoction of maidenhair was thought good to wash the head, and to make the hair grow; a similar preparation of quinces, which are a downy hairy fruit, was also accounted good for reproducing hair that had fallen off. Macassar oil and bear's grease now usurp their place among modern beaux, with perhaps as much claim to efficacy.

Balm, and wood-sorrel, representing the heart in figure, were, as a natural consequence, cardiacal; but the walnut was a most perfect type, bearing the signature of the whole head; the outward green cortex answering to the pericranium, the harder shell within representing the skull, and the kernel in its figure like to the lobes of the brain; and, therefore, clearly good for mental diseases. "Thus," says Mr. Heydon, in his Rosicrucian Physics, "did Divine Providence, by natural hieroglyphics, read lectures to the rude wit of vulgar man, and the disciples of the seraphically illuminated fraternity of Rosicrucian Christians, being sufficiently illuminated from these, found out the rest."

The shamrock, or trefoil, which was used by the Druids to cure diseases, and is the national badge of the Irish, acquired the latter distinction by its having been made an emblem of the Trinity, by St. Patrick.

When the Pagan Irish were unable to understand the doctrine of three Gods in one, he plucked a trefoil, and asked them, "Is it not as possible for the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to grow upon one stalk, as it is for these leaves to do so?" The argument was deemed conclusive by his hearers.

Each plant or root required a different method of gathering or digging up, and if the prescribed method was not religiously adhered to, both in hour and season, its virtue would be sure to fail at the greatest need.

The Druids held the oak in extreme veneration, and most particularly the misletoe, which was to be cut with a golden knife, to be gathered when the moon was six days old; the priest clothed in white; the portion cut off was to be received on a white napkin; and, lastly, two white bulls were to be sacrificed; and thus solemnly consecrated, the misletoe was an antidote to poison, and prevented sterility.

Fern-seed was thought to have the power of conferring invisibility; in allusion to which power, one asks in an old play, "Had you Gyges' ring, or the herb that gives invisibility?" and in Ben Jonson's "New Inn"—

> "——————— I had
> No medicine, Sir, to get invisible;
> No fern-seed in my pocket."

The ancients, who often paid more attention to preconceived opinions than to the evidence of their senses, believed that the fern bore no seed; our ancestors gained one step, and believed it bore seed, which was invisible; hence, from an extraordinary mode of reasoning, founded on the aforesaid doctrine of signatures, it was thought that they who possessed the secret of wearing this seed about them would

become invisible. Fern-seed was said to possess great magical powers, but it must be gathered on Midsummer's Eve. One who went to gather it reported, that the spirits whisked by his ears, and sometimes struck his hat, and different parts of the body, and at length, thinking he had got a sufficient quantity of it, he secured it in papers and a box, but when he came home he found all empty.

At the period when the belief in witchcraft was a matter of faith, there was scarcely any plant but had some share in its mysteries, especially where its habitat at all corresponded with the baneful effects attributed to it. Thus the Circæa, or Enchanter's Nightshade, which was celebrated for the purpose of raising the devil, grew among the mouldering bones and decayed coffins in ruinous vaults.

But beyond all in power was the mandrake; this root was fabled to grow under a gallows or place of execution, and arose from the fatty matter dropping from the body of the dead, which gave it the shape of a man; a fable somewhat similar to that of the serpent's teeth sowed by Cadmus. It is affirmed, by old authors, that mandrakes do make a noise, or give a great shriek, upon being pulled out of the earth,

> "Where the sad mandrake grows,
> Whose groans are deathful."

Thus there was great hazard of life to them that pulled up this root. Pliny saith, "When they intended to take up the root of this plant, they took the wind thereof, and with a sword describing three circles about it, they digged it up, looking towards the west." Another more cautious authority directs, that he who would take it up, in common prudence should tie a dog to it, to accomplish his purpose, as, if he did it himself, he would shortly die. What promoted these

strange conceptions might be the tradition, that this root was of great use to Circe, who, by the magic of simples, wrought so many wonders.

The mention made of mandrakes in the thirtieth chapter of Genesis, has proved the source of much discussion; though it is quite evident that some other species of plant was spoken of, as being a thing much prized. St. Augustin, who has commented on this passage, says, "It was a great curiosity to behold, as it was very beautiful to the eye;" but wondered why Rachel should set so high a value upon it, unless for its scarceness.

Pliny says, that Pythagoras composed a book on the magical virtues of plants, and first called the mandrake anthropomorphous, or man-shaped; this gave rise to the common practice of imposing on the ignorant by cutting the roots of briony into such a form. "There are many," says Mr. Martyn, "in several parts of Europe, who carry about and sell roots to ignorant people, which handsomely make out the shape of a man or woman; but these are not the production of nature, but contrivances of art, as divers have noted, and Matthiolus plainly detected and exposed. He learned this way of trickery from a vagabond cheater under his care; his words are, 'That is vain and fabulous which ignorant people and simple women believe, for the roots which are carried about by impostors, to deceive unfruitful women, are made of the roots of briony, and other plants; for in these, yet fresh and virent, they carve out the figures of men and women, first sticking therein the grains of barley or millet, where they intend the hair should grow; then bury them in sand until the grains shoot forth their roots, which at the longest will happen in twenty days; afterwards

they clip and trim those tender strings in the fashion of beard, and other hairy teguments*.'" Though much out of repute, even in Martyn's time, he says, "I have had them very gravely offered me for sale."

Another virtue of this root was the power of procuring sleep. Cleopatra thus asks for it,—

> "Give me to drink mandragora.
>
> *Charmian.* Why, Madam?
>
> *Cleopat.* That I may sleep out this great gap of time my Antony is away."

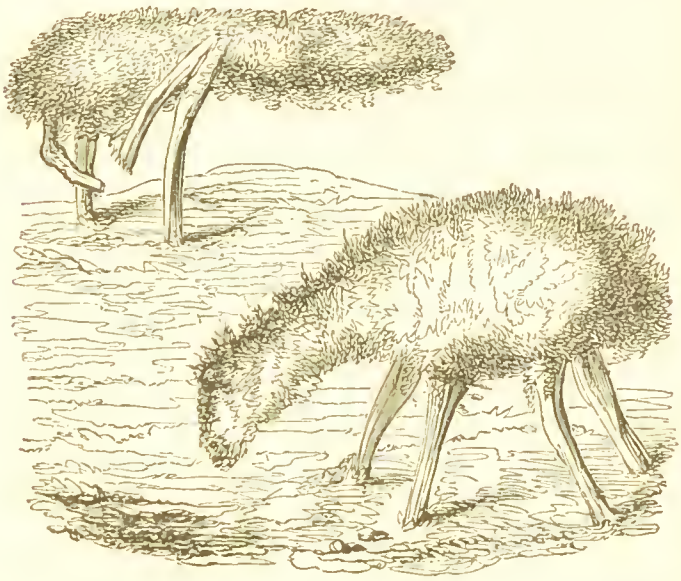
And Iago, having basely deceived Othello, with a malignant joy, adds,—

> "Not poppy nor mandragora,
> Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
> Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
> Which thou ow'dst yesterday."

The plant which in its natural form more faithfully represents an animal is the Scythian or Tartarian Lamb, or Barometz, in the language of the country; and, as it grows, it might, at a short distance, be taken for an animal rather than a vegetable production. It is one of the genus Polypodium; root decumbent, thick clothed with a very soft close wool, of a deep yellow colour, stipes from one foot and a half in length, appearing above the ground. It is well known to be a root which, from the variety of its shape, is easily made to take the form of a lamb, which the Tartars call Barometz. In China it is known by the name of Rufous Dog. Towards one end of the root, it fre-

* There is an admirable specimen of this species of imposture, still to be seen, the property of a gentleman, who was applied to for permission to have it copied, but he refused his consent.

quently becomes narrower, and then thicker, so as to give the resemblance of head and neck, and has sometimes two pendulous hanging excrescences, resembling ears; at the other end is a short root, resembling a tail.



Mr. Bell, in his "Journey to Ispahan," thus describes a specimen he saw: "It seemed to be made by art to imitate a lamb. It is said to eat up and devour all the grass and weeds within its reach. Though it may be thought that an opinion so very absurd could never find credit with people of the meanest understanding, yet I have conversed with some who were much inclined to believe it; so very prevalent is the prodigious and absurd with some part of mankind. Among the more sensible and experienced Tartars, I found they laughed at it as a ridiculous

fable." Loureiro affirms that the fresh root when cut yields a tenacious gum, like the blood of animals, and is used as a styptic to stop the bleeding of wounds.

De la Croix, in his "Connubia Florum," gives the following classical description of it:—

> Surgit humo Baromes. Præcelsa in stipite fructus,
> Stat quadrupes. Olli Vellus. Duo Cornua fronte
> Lanea, nec desunt oculi; rudis accola credit
> Esse animal, dormire die, vigilare per umbram,
> Et circum exesis pasci radicibus herbis
> Carnibus ambrosiæ, sapor est succique rubentes
> Post habeat quibus aliena suum Burgundiæ nectar,
> Atque loco, referre pedem, natura dedisset,
> Balatu si posset, opem implorare voraeis
> Ora lupi contra, credas in stirpe sedere
> Agnum equidem, gregibusque agnorum albescere colles.

Dr. Darwin, in his "Loves of the Plants," with poetic licence, adopting the fable says—

> "E'en round the pole the flames of love aspire,
> And icy bosoms feel the sacred fire;
> Cradled in snow, and fanned by arctic air,
> Shines, gentle Baromes, thy golden hair;
> Rooted in earth, each cloven hoof descends,
> And round and round her flexile neck she bends,
> Crops the grey coral moss, and hoary thyme,
> Or laps with rosy tongue the melting rime,
> Eyes with mute tenderness her distant dam,
> Or seems to bleat, a Vegetable Lamb."

The rare but occasional occurrence of vegetation in certain trees and shrubs, happening to take place about the period of our Saviour's birth, induced the superstitious peasant to believe, that such trees threw out their leaves with a holy joy, to commemorate that anniversary; as in like manner oxen and stags were supposed, and *had been seen*, to kneel down at

midnight on Christmas Eve, in humble adoration. Shakspeare has beautifully described this tradition, when the Ghost in Hamlet disappears at the crowing of the cock:

> "It faded on the crowing of the cock.*
> Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
> Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
> The bird of dawning singeth all night long:
> And then, they say, no spirit dares stir abroad:
> The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
> No fairy takes; no witch hath power to charm;
> So hallowed, and so gracious is the time."

An oak of the early-budding species has, for two centuries, enjoyed a fame for pious gratitude, for it was considered a matter of fact with many, that it shot forth its leaves on every Old Christmas-day, and that no leaf was to be seen before, or even after, that day during winter. A lady, in 1786, curious to prove the truth of this assertion, proceeded to Cadenham, in the New Forest, where the oak grew. On the third of January, the usual guide was ready to attend her; and on being desired to climb the oak, and search whether there were any leaves, he said, it would be to no purpose, but if she came on the Wednesday following she might see a thousand. He was prevailed on, however, to climb up, and on the first branch he reached, there appeared several new leaves, fresh sprouted from the buds, nearly half an inch long. The guide was more astonished than the lady at this premature production, for so strong was his belief in the truth of the whole tradition, that he

* The sudden departure of ghosts from the earth at that period of the morning is a matter of ancient belief. Philostratus, giving an account of the apparition of Achilles' shade to Apollonius Tyaneus, says, that it vanished with a little glimmer as soon as the cock crowed.

would have pledged his life, that not a single leaf was to be seen before the usual hour; but no leaves were to be found *afterwards*, *because* it was stripped by the numerous parties that were accustomed to visit it on Old Christmas-day. It is a curious fact in botany, that such a budding should take place about that season in this, as well as some other trees.

There appears to be another early-sprouting oak, near the spot where Rufus's monument stands. This seems to authenticate the account Camden gives of the scene of that prince's death; for he speaks of the premature vegetation of the very tree on which the arrow of Tyrrell first glanced, and the present tree may be a descendant of that one.

On Christmas eve, 1753, a vast concourse of people attended the noted thorn at Glastonbury, which was thought to have similar impulses with the New Forest oak; but, to their great disappointment, there was no appearance of its blowing, which made them watch it narrowly on the 5th of January, Old Christmas day, when it blew as usual. This famous Glastonbury hawthorn was said to be sprung from the staff of Joseph of Arimathea, who having fixed it in the ground with his own hand on Christmas-day, the staff took root immediately, put forth leaves, and the next day was covered with milk-white blossoms, and that it continued to blow every Christmas day during a series of years.

Besides the Holy Thorn, there was likewise, at Glastonbury, another miraculous tree. This was a walnut-tree; which was said never to shoot forth its leaves before the 11th of June, the feast of St. Barnabas. It has long ceased to exist; but while it was standing it was held in high respect by the credulous.

At Quainton, in Bucks, also, above two thousand

persons on one occasion went with lanterns and candles to view a blackthorn in that neighbourhood; which was remembered to be a slip from that of Glastonbury.

Mr. Gilpin relates a curious story of the groaning-tree at Badesly. About the middle of the last century, says he, a cottager who lived in the middle of the village of Badesly, two miles from Lymington, frequently heard a strange noise behind his house, like a person in extreme agony. Soon after, it caught the attention of his wife, a timorous woman; by degrees the neighbours heard it, and it was noised abroad through all the country. It was then plainly discovered to proceed from an elm, which grew at the end of the garden; it was young and vigorous, and to all appearance perfectly sound. All persons flocked to hear it, and it attracted the notice of the Prince and Princess of Wales, who then resided at Pilewell, the seat of Sir J. Worsley, for the advantages of sea-bathing; many causes were assigned, but none appeared equal to the explanation of it. For about twenty months it was an object of astonishment, and a pamphlet was drawn up descriptive of it.

It was made also the groundwork of a political squib, reflecting on the ministry of that time, in which it was said, the tree had been heard to groan* articulately, "O Walp—— O Walp—— it is thou that makest not only me, but the whole nation to

* A groaning-board was exhibited to the public in 1682; the advertisement respecting it ran thus: "At the sign of the Woolsack, in Newgate-market, is to be seen a strange and wonderful thing, which is, an elm board; being touched with a hot iron, it does express itself, as if it were a man dying, with groans and trembling, to the great admiration of all hearers. It hath been presented before the king and his nobles, and hath given great satisfaction."

groan." The owner of the tree at last making too rash an experiment, to discover the cause of its sufferings, bored a hole in the trunk; after this operation it ceased to groan; it was then rooted up, but nothing appeared to account for it, and it was generally believed that there was no trick in it, but that it was the result of natural causes.

The hazel has been much celebrated for its powers of discernment; a twig of which formed the divining rod for the discovery of mines. An old author on divination describes it as "a strange kind of exploration, and peculiar way of rhabdomancy, used in mineral discoveries. The method of proceeding is to take a forked hazel, commonly called Moses his rod, which freely held forth, will stir and play if any mine be under it; and though many have attempted to make it good, yet, until better information, we are of opinion with Agricola, that in itself it is a fruitless exploration, strongly scenting of pagan divination."

It was used also to discover any hidden spring of water, and, though one may seem as incredible as the other, there have not been wanting persons who have lately given evidence in favour of this property, and of that respectability as at least to suspend a judgment upon so extraordinary a phenomenon. In the twenty-second volume of the Quarterly Review will be found the following well authenticated history:— "It is just fifty years since Lady N.'s attention was first called to this subject; she was then sixteen years old, and was on a visit, with her family, at a chateau in Provence, the owner of which wanted to find a spring to supply his house, and for that purpose had sent for a peasant, who could do so with a twig. The English party ridiculed the idea, but still agreed to

accompany the man, who, after walking some way, pronounced that he had arrived at the object of his search, and they accordingly dug and found him correct. He was quite an uneducated man, and could give no account of the faculty in him, or of the means which he employed; but many others, he said, could do the same. The English party now tried for themselves, but all in vain, till it came to the turn of Lady N., when, to her amazement and alarm, she found that the same faculty was in her as in the peasant, and on her return to England she often exerted it, though in studious concealment, she was afraid lest she should be ridiculed, or get the name of a witch: in either case she thought she should never get a husband.

"Of late years her scruples began to wear away. When, in 1803, Dr. Hutton published Ozanan's Mathematical Recreations, where the effect of the divining rod is treated as absurd, she wrote a long letter, signed X. Y. Z., stating the facts which she knew. At Dr. Hutton's particular request, she went to see him at Woolwich, and she then showed him the experiment, and discovered a spring in a field which he had lately bought near the New College, then building, which field he afterwards sold to the College for a larger sum, in consequence of the spring. Lady N. afterwards showed the experiment to others in the park at W. She took a thin forked hazel twig, about sixteen inches long, and held it by the end, the joint pointing downwards; when she came to a place where water was under the ground, the twig immediately bent, and the motion was more or less rapid as she approached or withdrew from the spring; when just over it, the twig turned so quick as to snap, breaking near her fingers, which, by pressing it, were indented,

heated, and almost blistered. A degree of agitation was also visible in her face.

"When she first made the experiment, she says, this agitation was great, but has gradually decreased. She repeated the trial several times in different parts of the Park, and her indications were always correct.

"It is extraordinary that no effect is produced at a well or ditch, or where earth does not interpose between the twig and the water; the exercise of the faculty is independent of volition."

The reviewer concludes by saying, "So far our narrator; in whom, we repeat, implicit confidence may be placed."

It would be an endless task to attempt to give an account of the various superstitions which are attached to trees and plants. A glance at a few may suffice to give an idea of the whole. In some parts it is firmly believed that weak, ricketty, or ruptured children may be cured by drawing them through a split tree, if the tree be afterwards so bound as to reunite; in other parts a remedy for the hooping-cough is found in passing a child thrice before breakfast under a blackberry bush, of which both ends grow into the soil. Onions were formerly, and perhaps are now, used by rustic girls, to divine the name of the man whom they are to marry. Various names were formed upon onions, which were then placed in the chimney corner, and the onion which sprouted first bore the sought-for name. The plant mouse-ear, given in any manner to horses, was believed to prevent them from being hurt in shoeing; mugwort put into a man's shoes kept him from being weary on a long journey; moon-ear would open locks and bolts, and undo the shackles and shoes from horses' feet, a quality which must have rendered it very valuable to burglars and

horse-stealers; and houseleek would shield from lightning any house in which it grew; this privilege of being thunder-proof, it shared with the classical bay-tree. The mountain ash, rowan tree, or, as it is called in the northern counties, the wiggen tree, was of sovereign virtue as a preservative against the machinations of witchcraft.

Similar follies are to be observed in all countries. Here is a specimen from the East:—"There is a tree in India called peridexion, whose fruit is sweet and useful, so that doves also delight to tarry in it; and the serpent fears this tree, so that he avoids the shadow of it; for if the shadow of the tree go toward the east, the serpent flies towards the west; and if the shadow of the tree reach towards the west, the serpent flies toward the east; and the serpent cannot hurt the doves, because of the virtue of the tree; but if any of them straggle from the tree, the serpent, by its breath, attracts it and devours it. Yet when they fly or go together, neither the serpent nor the spar-hawk can, or dares, hurt them. Therefore, the leaves or bark of the tree, suffumigated, avert all evil that is of venomous beasts." This, though a fiction, is at least a poetical one.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE DELUSIONS OF ALCHEMY.

Origin of Alchemy—Argument for Transmutation—Golden Age of Alchemy—Alchemists in the 13th century—Medals metaphorically described—Jargon of Dr. Dee—The Green Lion—Roger Bacon—Invention of Gunpowder—Imprisonment of Alchemists—Edict of Henry VI.—Pope John XXII.—Pope Sixtus V.—Alchemy applied to Medicine—Paracelsus—Evelyn's hesitation about Alchemy—Narrative of Helvetius—Philadept on Alchemy—Rosicrucians—A Vision—Haydon's description of Rosicrucians—Dr. Price—Mr. Woulfe—Mr. Kellerman.

THE subject of Alchemy occupies so large a space in the humiliating history of the misapplication of talent, as to justify a particular enquiry into the causes of its origin, the grounds of its success, and the reason of its gradual decline. So much mysticism and fondness for ambiguity exist in the writings of the hermetic philosophers, as they were called, that it will not be surprising to find accounts of the origin of the science wrapped in equally extraordinary language.

To begin with Adam; he is said to have foreseen the deluge, and, for the purpose of providing against that catastrophe, to have erected two tables of stone, which contained the foundation of this wisdom. One of them, after the flood, was found on Mount Ararat. Alchemy has as frequently been called the hermetic art, as it is more generally supposed to have been invented by Hermes, King of Egypt, and master of this science, when Egypt was the garden of God. According to chronologers, his æra was before that of Moses. This was the true philosopher's stone, which so enriched that kingdom, and by means of which all the arts flourished; but in quest of which so many persons of all nations and ages have since fruitlessly

consumed both their fortunes and lives. Unlike their baffled successors, the Egyptians increased their wealth to that immense degree, that they studied means how to expend their exuberant stores in the erection of pyramids, obelisks, colossuses, monuments, pensile gardens, cities, and the labyrinth, and in forming the immense lake Mœris, and the like stupendous works, which cost so many millions of talents. "All these (say the believers in the science) are sufficient arguments of their skill in alchemy, whence they received so vast a supply of riches; for, since no authors mention any gold mines in the time of Osiris, or Hermes, whence could they have acquired such exceeding great wealth, but from the chemical art of transmuting metals?"

The Egyptian priests, under a promise of secresy, communicated the knowledge they possessed to the Alexandrian Greeks. The actual possession of much lucrative knowledge, and the reputation of still more valuable secrets, would attract the notice of the credulous and ignorant. With many the extent of the science was confined to the refining of metals, and preparations of chemical compounds; but the theoretical alchemist having in view a certain mysterious and unattainable object, despised the occupation of the mere chemist, and from policy, or want of clear ideas on the subject, the language of his art became more and more obscure. Knaves and impostors crept in, and, by impositions on the unwary and credulous, indemnified themselves for the ill success of their experiments.

Those chemists, who assumed the pompous title of alchemists, were persuaded that all metals were no other than nature's rude unfinished essays towards the making of gold; which, by means of due coction

in the bowels of the earth, advanced gradually towards maturity, till at last they were perfected into that beautiful metal. Their endeavours, therefore, were to finish what nature had begun, by procuring for the imperfect metals this much desired coction; and upon this grand principle all their processes were dependent.

The golden age of alchemy commenced, properly speaking, with the conquests of Arabian fanaticism in Asia and Africa, about the time of the destruction of the Alexandrian Library, and the subjection of Europe to the basest superstition. The Saracens, lively, subtile, and credulous, intimate with the fables of talismans and celestial influences, admitted, with eager faith, the wonders of alchemy. The rage of making gold spread through the whole Mahometan world; and in the splendid courts of Almansor and Haroun Al Raschid, the professors of the hermetic art found patronage, disciples, and emolument.

About the thirteenth century, Albertus Magnus, Roger Bacon, and Raymond Lully, appeared as the revivers of this science, which had been nearly lost in the interval from the tenth century; their writings again raised alchemy to a very high degree of credit, and their adventures, as well as those of their disciples, partake more of the character of oriental romance than the results of philosophic study. The most celebrated of the alchemic philosophers were not only the companions of princes, but many of them were even kings themselves, who chose this royal road to wealth and magnificence.

No delusion in the world ever excited so extensive and long-continued an interest, or rather it might be called madness; though it now seems wonderful how the fallacy of it should have escaped de-

tection during a period of seven or eight hundred years, when so many causes of suspicion and disappointment must have occurred amongst its professors; but the fond idea seems to have been strengthened by this want of success, which was attributed to any cause rather than the proper one.

An alchemist, in his writings, complains of the difficulties attending the search after the Immortal Dissolvent, as the grand agent in the operations was sometimes called; and very feelingly asserts, that the principal one is the want of subsistence or money, as without a supply of the latter to buy glasses, build furnaces, etc., the operations cannot go on.

The several metals were described metaphorically, as planets, animals, &c., and mystical allusions were made to the sacred Scriptures, in confirmation of the truth of the science, by the most forced interpretations of certain passages: as for instance—"He struck the stone, and water poured out, and he poured oil out of the flinty rock;" and the whole composition of the philosopher's stone was thought to be contained in the four verses, beginning, "He stretched forth the heavens as a curtain, the waters stood above the mountains."

The descriptions of the several necessary processes partook of such figurative language, as none but the adepts could possibly understand. Dr. Dee, in the fulness of his wisdom, thus instructs his disciples: "The contemplative order of the Rosie-cross have presented to the world angels, spirits, plants, and metals, with the times in astromancy and geomancy to prepare and unite them telesmatically. This is the substance which at present in our study is the child of the sun and moon, placed between two fires, and in the darkest night receives a light from the

stars, and retains it. The angels and intelligences are attracted by a horrible emptiness, and attend the astrolasms for ever. He hath in him a thick fire, by which he captivates the thin genii. That you may know the Rosicrucian philosophy, endeavour to know God himself, the worker of all things; now I will demonstrate in what thing, of what thing, and by what thing, is the medicine or multiplier of metals to be made. It is even in the nature, of the nature, and by the nature, of metals; for it is a principle of all philosophy that nature cannot be bettered but in her own nature. Common gold and silver are dead, and except they be renewed by art, that is, except their seeds, which are naturally included in them, be projected into their natural earth, by which means they are mortified and revived, like as the grain of wheat that is dead." This is somewhat worse than what Mr. Burke denominated a gipsy jargon.

The powder of transmutation, the grand means of projection, was to be got at by the following process, in which it was typified as the Green Lion: "In the Green Lion's Bed the sun and moon are born, they are married, and beget a king; the king feeds on the lion's blood, which is the king's father and mother, who are, at the same time, his brother and sister. I fear I betray the secret, which I promised my master to conceal in dark speech from every one who does not know how to rule the philosopher's fire." One would imagine, in the present day, that there was very little fear of being accused of too rashly divulging the important secret by such explanations. Our ancestors must have had a much greater talent than we have for finding out enigmas, if they were able to elicit a meaning from these mystical, or rather nonsensical, sentences.

Roger Bacon was the first English alchemist. He was born in 1214. Popular belief attributed to him the contrivance of a machine to rise in the air, and convey a chariot more speedily than by horses; and also the art of putting statues in motion, and drawing articulate sounds from brazen heads. From this it appears, that he had made considerable progress in the formation of automata. There can be no doubt that he discovered the mode of making gunpowder; in his works the secret may be found, veiled under an anagram. The discovery has, however, on doubtful authority, been ascribed to Berthold Schwartz, a German Benedictine friar, who lived about the middle of the fourteenth century. In an old print, the *merit*



of the invention is ascribed to the devil, who is represented as prompting the friar's operations, and enjoying their success.

Can we be surprised, that in an age of ignorance, the wonderful doings of Bacon obtained for him the name of a magician, and the friars of his own order refused to admit his works into their library, as though he was a man who ought to be proscribed by society? His persecution increased till 1278, when he was imprisoned, and obliged to own that he repented of the pains he had taken in the arts and sciences; and he was at last constrained to abandon the house of his order.

The credulity and avarice of princes often caused them to arrest alchemists, and, by means of the torture, endeavour to force them to multiply gold, or furnish the powder of projection, that it might be ready for use at any time; but it was generally found that, like poetical composition, perfect freedom of thought and action were necessary to so desirable an end.

There is an edict of Henry VI. king of England, in letters patent to lords, nobles, doctors, professors, and priests, to engage them in the pursuit of the philosopher's stone, especially the priests, who, having power (says the pious king) to convert bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, may well convert an impure into a perfect metal.

Even Pope John XXII., the father of the church, was weak enough to become an adept; he worked at the practice of hermetic philosophy in Avignon, and at his death were found eighteen millions of florins in gold, and seven millions in jewels and sacred vases. Notwithstanding his writing a treatise on alchemy, and making transmutations, yet such was the mischief arising in his times from the knavery of pretended alchemists, that he issued a bull, condemning all traders in this science as impostors.

Pope Sixtus V. had a true idea of the real value of this science; for, when one presented to him a book on alchemy, his holiness gave the author an empty purse, emblematic of the vanity of the study.

In the fifteenth century this science was applied to medical uses, and the preparations of mercury, antimony, and other metals, were used with the happiest success. The unexpected success which attended the first exhibition of chemical preparations awakened a new hope in the minds of the alchemists, which was no less than the discovery of a universal medicine, an elixir vitæ, for conferring immortality and perpetual youth and health. Paracelsus and Van Helmont entertained these visionary speculations; and the hopes of possessing a universal solvent long haunted the imaginations of writers on chemistry.

Paracelsus was born in 1494; he practised physic in Basle, and the following circumstance induced him to leave it. A canon was in extreme sickness, and the physicians forsook him as incurable: Paracelsus saw him, and promised to restore him to health. The canon expressed himself gratefully, as one who would feel the obligation, and make him a suitable recompense. Two pills performed the cure; which was no sooner effected, than the canon undervalued it, and contended against the claim of the doctor: he had been *cured too soon*. The magistrates were applied to, and they awarded Paracelsus a very moderate fee, proportioned to his short attendance; so, in disgust, he quitted the city, and declared that he would leave the inhabitants of Basle to the eternal destruction which they deserved. He then retired to Strasburg, and thence into Hungary, where he took to drinking; he died in great poverty, at Saltzburg, in 1541. Oporinus, who served him as his pupil,

said, he often saw him in great want, borrowing money of carmen and porters, and the next day he would repay them double from a fund that could not be discovered. His proper name was, Philip Aureolus Theophrastus Paracelsus Bombastus, of Hohenheim; and his disciples add, "Prince of Physicians, Philosopher of Fire, the Trismegistus of Switzerland, Reformer of Alchemistical Philosophy, Nature's faithful Secretary, Master of the Elixir of Life and Philosopher's Stone, Great Monarch of Chemical Secrets."

The ingenious Mr. Evelyn, both a sensible and learned man, seems to have been unwilling to deny the truth of what had so often been asserted to him; in his entertaining "Diary," he says, "June 4th, 1705, the season very dry and hot; I went to see Dr. Dickenson, the famous chemist; we had a long conversation about the philosopher's elixir, which he believed attainable, and himself had seen it performed, by one who went under the name of Mundanus, who sometimes came among the adepts, but was unknown as to his country or abode. The doctor has written a treatise in Latin, full of astonishing relations; he is a very learned man, formerly of St. John's, Oxford, where he practised physic."

Being in Paris, Mr. Evelyn visited Marc Antonio, an ingenious enameller, who told him two or three stories of men who had the great arcanum, and who had successfully made projection before him several times. "This," says Evelyn, who obviously hesitated between doubt and belief, "Antonio asserted with great obtestation; nor know I what to think of it, there are so many impostors, and people who love to tell strange stories, as this artist did; who had been a great rover, and spake ten different languages."

The most celebrated history of transmutation is that given by Helvetius, in his "Brief of the Golden Calf." It is thus given by Mr. Brande. "The 27th day of December, 1666, came a stranger to my house at the Hague, in a plebeick habit, of honest gravity and serious authority, of a mean stature, and a little long face, black hair not at all curled, a beardless chin, and about forty-four years of age, and born in North Holland. After salutation, he beseeched me, with great reverence, to pardon his rude access, for he was a lover of the pyrotechnian art, and having read my treatise against the sympathetic powder of Sir Kenelm Digby, and observed my doubt about the philosophic mystery, induced him to ask me if I really was a disbeliever as to the existence of an universal medicine, which would cure all diseases, unless the principal parts were perished, or the predestinated time of death come. I replied, I never met with an adept, or saw such a medicine, though I had fervently prayed for it. Then I said, 'Surely you are a learned physician.' 'No,' said he, 'I am a brass-founder, and a lover of chemistry.' He then took from his bosom-pouch a neat ivory box, and out of it three ponderous lumps of stone, each about the bigness of a walnut. I greedily saw and handled this most noble substance, the value of which might be somewhere about twenty tons of gold; and having drawn from the owner many rare secrets of its admirable effects, I returned him this treasure of treasures with a most sorrowful mind, humbly beseeching him to bestow a fragment of it upon me, in perpetual memory of him, though but the size of a coriander seed. 'No, no,' said he, 'that is not lawful, though thou wouldest give me as many golden ducats as would fill this room; for it would have particular consequences,

and if fire could be burned of fire, I would at this instant rather cast it into the fiercest flames.' He then asked if I had a private chamber, whose prospect was from the public street; so I presently conducted him to my best furnished room backwards, which he entered, (says Helvetius, in the true spirit of Dutch cleanliness,) without wiping his shoes, which were full of snow and dirt. I now expected he would bestow some great secret upon me, but in vain. He asked for a piece of gold, and opening his doublet, showed me five pieces of that precious metal, which he wore upon a green riband, and which very much excelled mine in flexibility and colour, each being the size of a small trencher. I now earnestly again craved a crumb of the stone, and at last, out of his philosophical commiseration, he gave me a morsel as large as a rape-seed, but I said, 'This scanty portion will scarcely transmute four grains of lead.' 'Then,' said he, 'deliver it me back; which I did, in hopes of a greater parcel; but he, cutting off half with his nail, said, 'Even this is sufficient for thee.' 'Sir,' said I, with a dejected countenance, 'what means this?' And he said, 'Even that will transmute half an ounce of lead.' So I gave him great thanks, and said, 'I would try it, and reveal it to no one.' He then took his leave, and said he would call again next morning at nine. I then confessed, that while the mass of his medicine was in my hand the day before, I had secretly scraped off a bit with my nail, which I projected in lead, but it caused no transmutation, for the whole flew away in fumes. 'Friend, said he, 'thou art more dexterous in committing theft, than in applying medicine. Hadst thou wrapped up thy stolen prey in yellow wax, it would have penetrated, and transmuted the lead into gold.' I then

asked, if the philosophic work cost much, or required long time, for philosophers say, that nine or ten months are required for it. He answered, 'Their writings are only to be understood by the adepts, without whom no student can prepare this magistery. Fling not away, therefore, thy money and goods in hunting out this art, for thou shalt never find it.' To which I replied, 'As thy master showed it thee, so mayst thou, perchance, discover something thereof to me, who know the rudiments, and therefore it may be easier to add to a foundation than begin anew.' 'In this art,' said he, 'it is quite otherwise; for, unless thou knowest the thing from head to heel, thou canst not break open the glassy seal of Hermes. But enough; to-morrow, at the ninth hour, I will show thee the manner of projection.' But Elias never came again; so my wife, who was curious in the art whereof the worthy man had discovered, teased me to make the experiment with the little spark of bounty the artist had left. So I melted half an ounce of lead, upon which my wife put in the said medicine; it hissed and bubbled, and in a quarter of an hour the mass of lead was transmuted into fine gold, at which we were exceedingly amazed. I took it to the goldsmith, who judged it most excellent, and willingly offered fifty florins for each ounce."

The accumulated disappointments of several centuries, in the prosecution of this science or discovery, did not eradicate the belief in its practicability; and, so late as the year 1698, one, humbly styling himself Philadept, wrote a book concerning adepts, not proving that they did exist, but leaving the *onus probandi* to those who were sceptical on the subject. Indeed, it was a generally received opinion, in the seventeenth century, that the philosopher's stone

did really exist; and the gravity and sincerity of the authors who discoursed of it, prove this. Philadept says, "It is evidently unreasonable to assert or deny any thing without reason; no man can give any good reason, importing that there is no such thing as the philosopher's stone. On the contrary, there are many reasons to believe there is such a thing. There is a tradition of it in the world: there are many books on that subject, written by men that show an extraordinary gravity, sincerity, and fear of God, and who solemnly and sacredly protest they have wrought it with their own hands; and, besides, they have, at several times, shown the effects of it, before divers witnesses, whereof there are too many instances to reject this proof. Then, they lay down principles which appear rational to any one that considers them. There have been, also, too many great cures performed by philosophers, to be reasonably questioned by them who *are* acquainted with those matters. Those that *are not*, ought not, in reason, to determine against it. My intention is not to dispute about the principles of hermetic philosophy; they have been established by many authors beyond dispute, but most clearly and invincibly by the learned Gasto Clavens of any I know."

Passages in Scripture, as has been stated above, were often brought forward in corroboration of the theory of alchemy, and it resulted, in the course of time, that a religious sect arose, who blended the mysteries of the Christian religion with the several processes of alchemy towards the grand regeneration of metals; a species of allegory understood and to be interpreted only by the disciples of that order, known by the name of Rosie Cross; its symbol being four red roses arranged in a crucial form. In a book,

intitled "The famous celebrated Nuptials of the thrice great Hermes, allegorically describing the mystical union and communion of Christ with every regenerate soul, composed by C. R., a German, of the order of the Rosie Cross, and published by him in 1559, this victim of mysticism and fanciful romance thus describes one of his hallucinations:—"On Easter eve I was in meditation, and being now ready to prepare in heart, together with my dear Paschal lamb, a small unleavened undressed cake, all on a sudden ariseth so horrible a tempest, that I imagined no other but that, through its mighty force, the hill whereupon my house was founded would fly in pieces. But, inasmuch as this and the like, from the devil—who had done me many a spite—was no new thing to me, I took courage, and persisted in my meditations till somebody, after an unusual manner, touched me on the back, whereupon I was so hugely terrified that I durst hardly look about me; yet I showed myself as cheerful as, in the like occurrences, human frailty would permit. The same thing twitched me several times; I looked, and beheld a fair and glorious lady, whose garments were all sky-coloured, having a bundle of letters in all languages in her hands. She selects a small one and lays it on the table, and, without a word, departed with so mighty a blast, that for a quarter of an hour I could not hear my own words. The note was sealed with a curious cross, having this inscription—*In hoc signo* ✠ *vinces:* within the note was written—

This day, This day, this, this,
The royal nuptials is;
Art thou thereto by birth inclined,
And unto joy of God designed?

Then may'st thou to the mountain tend,
Whereupon three stately temples stand,
And there see all from end to end;
Keep watch and ward, thyself regard;"

Having prayed for advice how to act, he is instructed in a vision what will happen to him; he then wakes and prepares for his journey, "putting on a white garment, girding his loins with a blood-red ribbon, bound crosswise over his shoulders, and in his hat were stuck four red roses, that he might be the sooner taken notice of by this token among the throng."

This sect became a secret society; it originated in Germany, and attracted the attention of all Europe for twenty-five years. Part of their mystery consisted in an almost miraculous method of curing diseases. Some of their pretensions were explained by one John Hayden, servant of God and secretary of nature, in a book, intitled, "A new method for the cure of all diseases, freely given to inspired Christians." In an "Apologue for an Epilogue," he saith, "I shall here tell you what Rosicrusians are, and that Moses was their father, and he was the child of God. Some say they were of the order of Elias, some of Ezechiel, others define them to be the officers of the generalissimo of the world; that are as the eyes and ears of the great king, seeing and hearing all things, for they are seraphically illuminated, as Moses was, according to this order of the elements, earth refined to water, water to air, air to fire." Such is the gibberish which could once not only find readers, but even dupes to follow in the train of the writers.

In later times there have been a few believers in transmutation. In the year 1782, Dr. Price, of

Guildford, by means of a white and red powder, professed to convert mercury into silver and gold; and he is said to have convinced many disbelievers of the possibility of such a change. His experiments were repeated seven times before learned and intelligent persons, who themselves furnished all the materials, except the powders which were to operate the transmutation. These powders were in very small quantity. By whatever means it may have been accomplished, it is certain that gold and silver were produced. But, admitting that, with respect to its production, Price was an impostor, it is indubitable that he must have been in possession of one valuable secret, that of fixing mercury, so as not to evaporate in a red heat. Price published an account of these experiments, but stated that he had expended the whole of his powder, and that he could not obtain more, except by a tedious process, which had already injured his health, and which, therefore, he would not repeat. He died in the following year, and his death was attributed to his having swallowed laurel-water, in order to evade further scrutiny and the detection of his imposture. The fact of his having poisoned himself is at least doubtful.

Another true believer in the mysteries of this art, says Mr. Brande, was Peter Woulfe. He occupied chambers in Barnard's Inn, when he resided in London. His rooms, which were extensive, were so filled with furnaces and apparatus, that it was difficult to reach his fireside. A gentleman once put down his hat and never could find it again, such was the confusion of boxes, packages, and parcels, that lay about the chamber. Woulfe had long vainly searched for the elixir, and attributed his repeated failures to

the want of due preparation by pious and charitable acts. Some of his apparatus is said to have been extant since his death, upon which are supplications for success, and for the welfare of the adepts. He had an heroic remedy for illness; when he felt himself seriously indisposed, he took a place in the Edinburgh mail, and having reached that city, immediately came back in the returning coach to London. He died in 1805.

The last of the English alchemists seems to have been a gentleman of the name of Kellerman, who, as lately as 1828, was living at Lilley, a village between Luton and Hitchin. He was a singular character, who shunned all society, carried six loaded pistols in his pockets, barricaded his house, and filled his grounds with spring-guns. The interior of his dilapidated mansion was a complete chaos. He pretended to have discovered the universal solvent, the art of fixing mercury, and the powder of projection. With the last of these he had, he said, made gold, and could make as much as he pleased. He kept eight men for the purpose of superintending his crucibles, two at a time being employed, who were relieved every six hours. He had one characteristic of a disturbed intellect, that of believing that all the world was in a confederacy against him, and that there was a conspiracy to assassinate him.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### ASTROLOGY.

Supposed Origin of Astrology—Butler on the Transmission of Astrological Knowledge—Remarks on Astrology by Hervey—Petrarch's Opinion of Astrology—Catherine of Medicis—Casting of Nativities in England—Moore's Almanack—Writers for and against Astrology—Horoscope of Prince Frederick of Denmark—Astrologers contributed sometimes to realize their own Predictions—Caracalla—Mr. Turner—Woman who foretold, from a Portrait, the time when the Original would die—Stiff the Fortune-teller and his foolish Pupil—Expulsion of the Cholera from Jeypore—Cingalese Astrological Instructions.

ASTROLOGY has been divided into natural and judiciary, or judicial; but it is only the latter division which will come under present consideration, and its definition has been said to be the art of foretelling future events, from the aspects, positions, and influences of the heavenly bodies.

The idea that they should have any influence, direct or indirect, on our actions in this nether world, or that they obliged us to the performance of any act, however extraordinary, may have been originally supposed, by those who were familiar with the figurative language of the Prophets, to receive confirmation from the facts, and the style of the predictions, recorded in sacred history. They would find, for instance, that the Star in the East was foretold, which at its coming was to announce peace and good-will towards men; and the latter and more solemn revelations, concerning the final consummation of all things, typified that awful event by signal appearances in the heavens.

Traditionary knowledge of these events and predictions, coupled with ignorance of the causes of

meteorological phenomena, now better understood, might easily lead the timid and superstitious to forebode evil from the disastrous twilight of the eclipse, or to impute a favouring influence to the rising of certain stars at particular seasons. The universal custom of traversing the deserts, or navigating ships across the pathless ocean, by the observation of the stars, previously to the discovery of the compass, led the imaginative to conceive, that the moral path of life was equally to be regulated by astral indications. It must be owned, too, that it was not unnatural for simple unreasoning minds thus to connect the glorious sun, the moon, when walking in brightness, queen of heaven *, and the host of stars, with the destinies of man.

Fear, it is said, first deified the ancient heroes. It was a storm and an eclipse that first consecrated Romulus; nor had Jupiter himself been master of heaven, or worshipped on earth, if the terrors of his thunders had not advanced the conceit of his divinity. It is quite certain that, by degrees, a system was formed, which took hold of the imaginations of all classes of

* The queen of heaven is a more poetical idea than the man in the moon; though it must be confessed, in indulgence to the popular opinion, the appearances on the surface of the moon do not unaptly suggest such an outline. In Ceylon, however, they place a hare instead of a man in the moon; and thus very satisfactorily account for this circumstance:—"Buddha, their deity, when a hermit on earth, lost himself in a wood, when he met a hare, who showed him the way; Buddha thanked the animal, and added, 'Mr. Hare, I am both hungry and poor, and cannot reward you.' 'If you are hungry,' replied the hare, 'I am at your service; make a fire, kill, and roast me.' Buddha made the fire, and the hare instantly jumped into it, but Buddha caught hold of it, and flung it into the moon, where it still remains." A French gentleman, returned lately from Ceylon, says, "The Cingalese would often beg permission to look at the hare through my telescope, and would exclaim in raptures that they saw it."

persons; and the truth of such a doctrine, and its decisions, it was heretical to doubt. J. Butler, one of the devout believers in Astrology, far from thinking it a remnant of Pagan superstition, calls it a divine science. He pretended, with many others, "that Adam, after his fall, communicated it out of his memories of the state of innocency, to Seth. He in his turn made impressions of the same in certain permanent pillars, able to withstand fire and water, by which means the science passed to Enoch and Noah. Shem was instructed by his father, and communicated his knowledge to Abraham, who carried it into Chaldea and Egypt. Moses, "skilled in all the learning of the Egyptians, was also thought to have been an able astrologer."

Thus was the vanity of the more modern professors of the art encouraged, and they maintained that the heavens were one great volume, wherein God had written the history of the world; and, of course, it was to be understood that the astrologers were the high-priests, who alone could expound its mysterious pages.

The author of the "Contemplations on the Starry Heavens" has, with great propriety, made the following remarks on this science:—"The pretenders to judicial astrology talk of I know not what mysterious efficacy, in the different aspects of the stars, or the various conjunction and opposition of the planets. Let those who are unacquainted with the sure word of revelation give ear to these sons of delusion and dealers of deceit. For my own part, it is a question of indifference to me, whether the constellations shone with smiles, or lowered in frowns, on the hour of my nativity. Can these bodies advertise me of future events, which are unconscious of their own existence?"

In the time of Petrarch, though astrologers had great credit, that learned man only laughed at their pretensions. Of one of them, in particular, he says, "The astrologer was older and wiser than I was; I loved him, and should have been still more attached to him if he had not been an astrologer. I sometimes joked, and sometimes reproached him, about his profession. One day, when I had been sharper than usual with him, he replied, with a sigh, 'Friend, you are in the right; I think as you do, but I have a wife and children.' This answer touched me so much, that I never spoke to him again on that subject."

Queen Catherine of Medicis, though a woman of strong mind, was deluded, with the more ignorant, by the vanity of astrological judgments; the professors of the science were so much consulted in her court, that the most inconsiderable act was not to be done without an appeal to the stars.

In England, William Lilly, John Gadbury, and others, set up for prophets; and nativities were cast for all who could afford to pay for the privilege of searching into futurity. It was but natural that the inquirers should have to reward such intelligence in proportion to the distance it was brought, or its flattering nature; events, however, soon proved it to be far-fetched and nothing worth.

The volumes of tiresome absurdity, written on this subject, about the beginning and middle of the seventeenth century, would exceed present belief; and nothing but a thorough though unaccountable conviction, in their readers, that they spoke the language of truth, could have ever made the perusal of them tolerable.

Moore's "Prophetic Almanack," with its astrological predictions and "hieroglyphic for the year," is

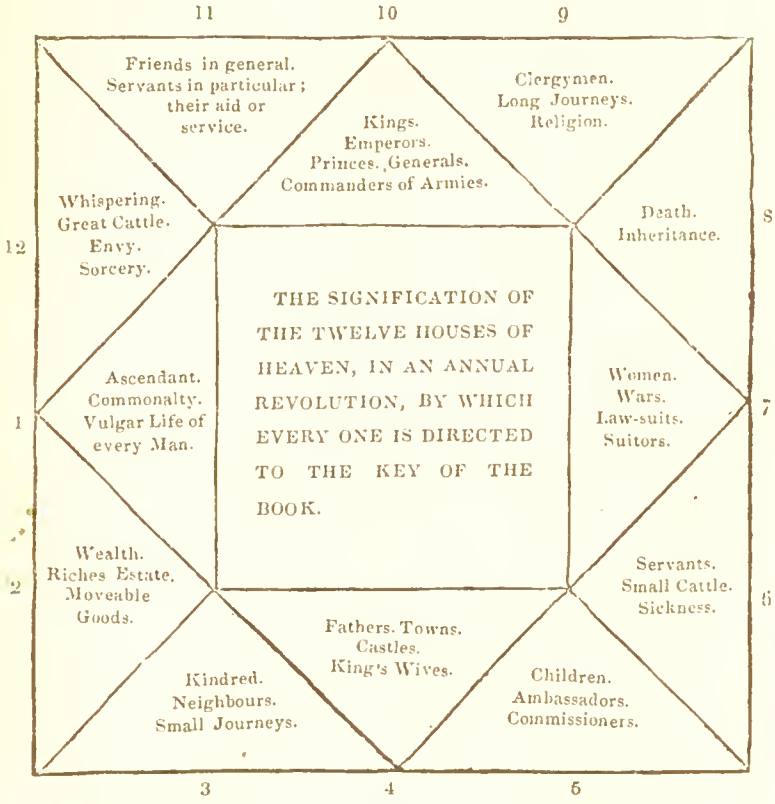
the only legacy left to us of this species of composition and imposition. It would be beneath the dignity of such a philosopher to be guilty of a pun; though the more irreverent of his readers might naturally have suspected him of such an intention, when, a few years since, he prophesied that, "Towards the close of the year *Turkey* will be much embroiled."

Some writers, in the more fortunate era of astrology, ventured to impugn the truth of the doctrine, and to ridicule its professors, particularly in the persons of Lilly and Gadbury, who retorted with acrimonious and arrogant vulgarity. Further curiosity on this subject may be gratified, by turning to such works as "Supernatural Sights and Apparitions, seen in London by William Lilly;" or the reply to it, "Black Monday turned White, or a Whip at Star-gazers."

One of the opposers of this science argued, naturally enough, that God had assigned the stars their site and course, which no power of man or angel was able to alter; but man's fancy had built us imaginary houses in the heavens, to which were attached such qualifications, affections, &c. as the framers pleased.

These houses were twelve in number; in one or other of which, according to the hour and season of the person's birth, did he take his position, as pointed out in the horoscope. An outline of a general horoscope is annexed, and in explanation of it Mr. William Lilly is pleased to say, "When I speak of the tenth house, I intend somewhat of kings or persons represented by that house, which is also called *medium cœli*, the mid heaven; when mention is made of the first house, ascendant or horoscope, I intend the commonalty in general. Dic et eris mihi magnus Apollo."

## Plan of a Horoscope.




Mr. Gadbury, also, in the nativity cast for the illustrious Prince Frederic of Denmark, informs us, that "It is an aphorism nearly as old as astrology itself, that if the lord of the ascendant of a revolution be essentially well placed, it declares the *native* to be

pleasant, healthful, and of a sound constitution of body, and rich in quiet of mind all that year; and that he shall be free from cares, perturbations, and troubles.—The nativity of Frederick Prince of Denmark, astrologically performed by John Gadbury, 1660."

It often happened, with regard to the responses given by the oracles, that they in some measure corresponded with the subsequent events; in like manner did the astrological casters of nativities seem to have their presumptuous pretensions verified by after circumstances. Caracalla lost his life by seeking to preserve it from supposed treachery; for, while in Mesopotamia, being jealous of a plot against him, he sent to the Roman astrologers for the particulars of it. They accused Macrinus, his faithful prefect, of a conspiracy, which nothing but his death could frustrate. This answer coming while the emperor was intent on some sport, he gave it to Macrinus to read; who, finding his innocent life in danger by this trick of the astrologers, secured it by the murder of Caracalla, of which, even in thought, he had before been innocent; though the result proved the apparent truth of the prediction of the astrologers.

Mr. Gadbury might be considered partly incidental to the death of a Mr. Turner, of Winchington, about the year 1700. It is thus recorded by John Colebatch:—"I shall presume to take notice of a thing that happened, which was a kind of preludium to Mr. Turner's death, and, for aught I know, the thoughts of it might deject his spirits, and have a fatal influence upon him. About April last, Mr. Gadbury came to him and told him, that he would die in the country during the summer, of a surfeit of drinking. He received this intelligence with a smile, and replied, 'I die of drinking, who am the soberest man in England:

that's impossible!' Some time afterwards, he went to Winchington. Just as he was going, one of his friends bid him remember what Mr. Gadbury had said, and beware of drinking. As soon as he was taken ill, remembering, I suppose, Mr. Gadbury's words, he told his son he should not recover. Mr. Turner had sat down to drink, but nothing extraordinary, two days previously to his being taken ill, with other gentlemen, and had related what had passed between Mr. Gadbury and himself; and that it is true, I can produce several persons of undoubted reputation to testify." Whether Mr. Turner died from a prepossession of the truth of Mr. Gadbury's prediction, or from a disease calculated to destroy life, there is no other document to prove; at all events, it shows the general belief and impression, at that period, in favour of such prophetic sagacity.

Mr. William Lilly, who encouraged the prevailing credulity by absurd fictions, relates, with great apparent good faith, how a poor woman had the singular gift of foretelling the death of any one, from the bare inspection of their portraits. Such renown had she, that, about the year 1615, King James, when at Hampton Court, sent for this poor woman, to a house in one of the Moulseys. There were provided purposely the pictures of King James, Queen Ann, Palsgrave and his lady, the Duke of Richmond, and Marquis Hamilton.

The poor woman no sooner entered the room, and had performed her homely compliments, but she looked seriously on every picture, and, with great silence, took down the portrait of Queen Ann, and laid it gently under the table, making signs with her fingers the number of years she should live, and so of

King James, the duke, and the marquis. Not one of those exceeded the number of years limited by her, but died precisely at the time. She then took the Palsgrave and his lady, threw them on the ground, and with her stick did nothing but beat the pictures, and at last tore them in pieces. A young man coming into the room, and calling her a witch, she muttered, and signified he should be hanged in two years and a half; and so he was, for coining of silver.

The latest account extant, of an astrologer practising his profession with success, is to be found in the reports at Union Hall, June 21, 1832, when an application was made at that office for a warrant against a Mr. Stiff, far famed for casting nativities with the greatest accuracy. The applicant for the warrant said he had a valuable book stolen from him, and, to find out the thief, he went to Mr. Stiff, who, after some apparent study, exclaimed, "I have it!" and described with admirable minuteness the features, figure, and dress, of a female, to whom the applicant was paying his addresses, adding, that the person whom he so described was the thief. This description so agreed with that of the young lady he at one time loved sincerely, that, from the day he first consulted Mr. Stiff, he had broken off all acquaintance with her. Indeed he was so convinced that she was the thief, upon hearing Mr. Stiff pronounce the fact, that he discarded her from that moment, not feeling inclined *to proceed against her*. The magistrates could scarcely refrain from loud laughter at the credulity evinced by this simpleton's visit to the wise man. It was not in consequence of the loss of his book or his mistress, that the present complaint was made; but because he had given Mr. Stiff ten pounds, to teach him the art of astrology, which sum he

wished to recover, because in the end he found himself as ignorant as ever.

In many parts of the world, particularly in the East, astrology still reigns with undiminished sway. Among the Hindus, it exercises a powerful influence upon all their actions. No affair of consequence is undertaken without the astrologer being consulted. When, about ten years ago, the cholera raged at Jeypore, the astrologers hit upon the following curious mode of ejecting it from the city. They and the singers attended, and the state band commenced playing. A Bramin lighted a row of lamps, and selected four goats. After killing two of them at two of the gates, and a third at the burying-ground, he lighted a wisp of straw, ran with it to another gate, and killed there the fourth goat. He next drew in a brass pot some water from a sacred well, muttered a charm over it, and sprinkled a portion on the walls, from which simultaneously issued four snakes (no doubt previously secreted there), and fled towards the west. When they were gone, the Bramin declared that they were the spirits of pestilence, in the form of serpents, that they were now expelled, and that, to prevent their return, the people must repair, on a certain day, to the temple of Hanuman.

That astrology is not less prevalent in Ceylon than on the Indian continent is manifest from the following curious directions for storing grain, and celebrating a festival. "In the 1746th year of the glorious æra of Saka, being the present year, designated Taaruna, appropriate to the sun, and belonging to the first division, over which Brahma presides, of the cycle of sixty years, the commencing year of which is denominated Prebhava, on the twelfth day of the sun in

Capricorn, month of Nawan Masse, third day of the increasing moon, Saturday. At the completion of the fifteenth hour of the morning,* at the propitious moment when the prevailing constellation shall be Seeva Wase, and the sign of Arise, and the hour influenced by Lunies. Viewing the month (at this propitious moment), it will be good, and conducive of a happy result, to deposit the new corn and rice in the Royalty Gabadawe, which is comparable to the 'all desires-fulfilling tree,' the Kalpa Warksha, in order to induce plenitude of grain and of riches therein.

"On the fourteenth day of the sun in Capricorn above mentioned, on the fifth day of the increasing moon, Monday, at the completion of three quarters of the first hour of the night,† the propitious moment when the prevailing constellation shall be Uttrapotupe, and the sign Capricorn, and the hours under the denomination of the sun, viewing the north-east (at the propitious moment), in order to induce exemption from sickness, and constant prosperity to his excellency, the eminent governor of the three divisions of Ceylon, and who is comparable to the mighty royal lion, the vanquisher of all his foes, it will be good to enjoy the five nectareous viands with the first produced grain—Success! Prosperity! Health!"

It will be seen, from this specimen, that the Cingalese astrologers are by no means behind their European brethren in the use of an unintelligible jargon; and that they are as determined flatterers of the great as the most voracious devourer of flat-

* This answers to twelve at noon.

† A Cingalese hour is equal to twenty-four minutes; consequently, eighteen minutes after dark.

tery could desire. The reader will not fail to observe, likewise, that, when they are singing the praises of "the eminent governor," they find no difficulty in expressing themselves so as to be clearly understood.

---

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### MEDICAL DELUSIONS AND FRAUDS.

State of Medicine in remote Ages—Animals Teachers of Medicine—Gymnastic Medicine—Cato's Cure for a Fracture—Dearness of ancient Medicines and medical Books—Absurdity of the ancient Materia Medica: Gold, Bezoar, Mummy—Prescription for a Quartan — Amulets —Virtues of Gems — Corals — Charms — Charm for sore Eyes—Medicine connected with Astrology—Cure by Sympathy—Sir Kenelm Digby—The real Cause of the Cure—The Vulnerary Powder, &c.—The Royal Touch—Evelyn's Description of the Ceremony—Valentine Greatrakes—Morley's Cure for Scrofula—Inoculation—Vaccination — Dr. Jenner—Animal Magnetism—M. Loewe's Account of it—Mesmer, and his Feats—Manner of Magnetising—Report of a Commission on the Subject — Metallic Tractors—Baron Silfverhielm and the Souls in White Robes—Mr. Loutherbourg—Empirics—Uroscopy—Mayersbach — Le Febre—Remedies for the Stone—The Anodyne Necklace—The Universal Medicine—Conclusion.

The history of the art of medicine begins with fable and conjecture, and rests on dubious tradition. Fifty years prior to the Trojan war, Æsculapius is said to have been deified, on account of his medical skill; and Machaon and Podalirius, his sons, formed the medical staff of the Grecian army before Troy. In the temples of the gods diseases and cures were registered, and engraved on marble tables and hung up, for the benefit of others. The priests, at that time, prepared the medicines, and made it a lucrative trade; and fables were invented to increase the renown of the oracle, for difficult cases were stated to

be caused by the immediate wrath of Heaven, in which the only remedies were prayers and sacrifices, fear urging the trembling patients to follow whatever course was prescribed.

From the sacred writings little medical information is derived: Moses gave precautionary directions for the prevention or cure of leprosy, consisting chiefly of cleanliness; and religion was called in to enforce the medicinal ordinances. In Babylon, we are told by Herodotus, that the sick were carried out to the public roads, that travellers might converse with them, and acquaint them with any remedies they had seen used in such complaints with success. In Egypt, each physician applied himself to one disease; and Prosper Alpinus, in his History of Egyptian Medicine, reports that they took the hints of curing divers diseases from brute beasts: thus phlebotomy was taken from a practice noticed in the hippopotamus, or river horse, which bleeds itself when plethoric, by pressing its thigh on a sharp pointed reed. Dogs and cats are known, when sick, to vomit themselves by eating grass; swine, when ill, refuse meat, and so recover by abstinence. In like manner from numerous bodies, as flies, locusts, &c., being inclosed in amber, it is thought the art of embalming was first suggested.

Gymnastic medicine was founded by Herodicus; games and sports had been early instituted in the Grecian states, and were divided into religious, military, athletic, and lastly medical gymnastics, particularly adapted for the prevention or cure of diseases. Herodicus, from his observations on its advantages, commenced practising as a physician, and it was his only panacea. After him came Hippocrates, who made the first successful attempt to separate the

medical profession from rash empiricism, and the frivolous dreams of philosophers. He compared the body to a circle, in which a universal sympathy of parts existed; his great repute arose from his skill in predicting crises, which he was enabled to do with perfect precision.

Pliny says Rome was inhabited six hundred years before any physicians established themselves there; and for some time the medicine of the Romans consisted of charms, fascinations, incantations, and amulets. The book of Cato "De Re Rustica," is a proof of the gross superstition and ignorance of those times. He proposed, in a case of fracture to have it bound up, and the following words sung every day—"Huat, Hanat, ista pista, fista, dominabo, damnastra et luxata."

When the religious phrensy of the Mahometans was abated, and they became enriched by commerce, arts and literature, after ages of barbarism, were again cultivated with great industry, and the medical profession, in particular, was rewarded and encouraged with rank and bountiful endowments. Ætius complained in his time of the general use of quack medicines, nostrums, &c., and of the immense price demanded for those which were fortunate enough to rise into general repute. Danaus, he tells us, sold his collyrium, at Constantinople, at the astonishing price of one hundred and twenty pieces of gold to each patient; and sometimes could scarcely be persuaded upon to sell it at any price. Nicostratus demanded no less than two talents for his celebrated isotheosis, or antidote against the colic.

The works of the Grecian and Arabian physicians, when they became to be more generally known in the fifteenth century, were most highly prized. In the

year 1471, Louis XI. borrowed the works of Rhazes from the Paris faculty, but was obliged, previously, to deposit a quantity of plate, and find a nobleman to join with him, as an additional security for the care and safe return of the book. Jew physicians were at that time employed by the Pope, and most of the crowned heads in Europe. John of Gaddesden was the first Englishman appointed Court Physician in London. His idea of the treatment of diseases was rather different from the theories of the present day; for when attending the king's son for small-pox, he directed the room to be hung with scarlet cloth, and the patient to be rolled up in similar stuff.

The *rationale* of the Materia Medica one hundred and fifty or two hundred years since was very extraordinary, as well with respect to the nature of the substances proposed as remedies, as to the number of ingredients, sometimes thirty or forty, which were congregated together in each composition, upon the principle that if one did not reach the disorder another might.

The nature of the substances used was, often, even more extraordinary and disgusting than their variety; many of them were thought to act by a charm, or by the strong sensation of disgust which their exhibition excited, rather than by any more direct appeal to the disordered part. The more precious also the article, the more certain was thought the cure.

The *aurum potabile*, and other preparations of gold, were conceived to have many virtues. Gold, by the chemical writers, was styled the sun and king of metals. Kings and princes were thus amused and defrauded, and their lives made shorter than those of their subjects who were beneath the use of gold.

The chickens they ate were fed with gold, that they might extract the sulphur, and prepare the metal by their circulation; the physicians were contented to collect all the gold, which passed unaltered and undiminished through the poultry, into their pockets.

Bezoar denotes an antidote, from a Persian word, and is generally applied to medicinal stones, generated in the stomach and other viscera of animals. Bezoars usually attain the size of acorns or pigeons' eggs, the larger the more valuable. A stone of one ounce was sold in India for one hundred livres, and one of four ounces and a quarter for two thousand; they were very scarce, and few of the genuine ever came into the European market, the greater number that were sold being artificial compounds. The hog bezoar, or Pedra del Porco, was first brought into Europe by the Portuguese; it is found in the gall-bladder of a boar in the East Indies; the Indians attribute infinite virtues to it, as a preservative against poison, cholera, &c. The porcupine and monkey bezoars were held in such esteem by the natives of Malacca, that they never parted with them unless as presents to ambassadors and princes; single stones have been sold for sixty or eighty pounds sterling. In 1715, bezoar was thought equal in value to gold. Dr. Patin says of it, the most visible operation it hath is when the bill is paid; and he calls it the scandalous stone of offence, and lasting monument of perseverance in imposture.

The most loathsome preparations were recommended, and eagerly used by the sick. Mummy had the honour to be worn in the bosom, next the heart, by kings and princes, and all those who could bear the price. It was pretended, that it was able to preserve the wearer from the most deadly infections,

and that the heart was secured by it from the invasion of all maliguity. A dram of a preparation called treacle of mummy, taken in the morning, prevented the danger of poison for all that day. Thus decayed spices and gums, with the dead body of an Egyptian, were thought to give long life.

To cure a quartan, or the gout, "take the hair and nails, cut them small, mix them with wax, and stick them to a live crab, casting it into the river again." The moss from a dead man's scull was held to be of sovereign virtue in some cases.

Amulets were much used formerly, not only to eure but to prevent disease, and also were thought to have a wonderful power over the moral qualities and affections. The onyx, worn as an amulet, strengthened the heart, and refreshed phantasms. The ruby resisted poisons, and preserved from the plague. If a man was in danger it changed colour, and became dim, but recovered its brightness when the danger was past. Hence, perhaps, was the original motive for carrying jewels and precious stones, set in rings or in seals.

Corals, says Paracelsus, "are of two sorts: one, a clear bright shining red; the other, a purple dark red. The bright is good to quicken phansie, and is against phantasies, or nocturnal spirits, which fly from these bright corals, as a dog from a staff, but they gather where the dark coral is. A spectre or ghost is the starry body of a dead man: now these ethereal or starry bodies cannot endure to be where the bright corals are, but the dark-coloured allures them; the operation therefore is natural, not magical, or superstitious, as some may think. Bright coral restrains tempests of thunder and lightning, and defends us from the cruelty of savage monsters,

that are bred by the heavens contrary to the course of nature; for sometimes the stars pour out a seed, of which a monster is begotten; now these monsters cannot be where corals are."

The use of charms in medicine was a very ancient practice, and, when once commenced, each succeeding charm became more ridiculous. Pierius mentions an antidote against the sting of a scorpion; the patient was to sit on an ass, with his face to the tail, for by this means the poison was transmitted from the man to the beast. Sammonicus, a poetical physician, recommended the fourth book of Homer's Iliad to be laid under the patient's head to cure a quartan ague. The efficacy of scriptural sentences was deduced from the custom of the Jews wearing phylacteries.

An approved spell for sore eyes was worn as a jewel about many necks: it was written on paper, and inclosed in silk, "never failing to do sovereign good when all other helps were helpless. No sight might dare to read it, but at length a curious mind, while the patient slept, by stealth ripped open the mystical cover, and found in Latin, Diabolus effodiat tibi oculos, implcat foramina stercoribus."

When astrology was in repute, physic was generally practised with some reference to the stars, and the astrological judgments became a very common object of inquiry amongst physicians. A Dr. Saunders, who wrote very fully on this branch of the science, thus commences:—

"From hence
Withdraw all carping critics that deny
The great art of sublime astrology,
Which, unto such as have attained the key,
Shows the true cause of a disease, and may
Direct the doctor, expeditionsly,
The nearest way to cure the malady."

But, says he, "the firm and steadfast confidence in the Almighty is quite essential to the happy conclusion of all expectionates; for, if thou presumest otherwise, no doubt but that will be verified on thee which the prophet sayeth to the Chaldeans, 'Sapientia et scientia te decepiet,' for either, by thy own ignorance and mistaking, thou wilt be seduced, or else Heaven itself shall yield unto thee so ambiguous an answer, that thou shalt not be able to conclude any certainty.

"The Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Arabians, do observe many curious observations in this art, as translation of light, prohibition, contraradiation, restitution, frustration, obsession, cursuvacation, cursutardation, ferality, augedescention, meridiodescentia, luminiminution, numeriminution, via combusta, &c., which, although I wish not to deny to have some small effect, yet I have often proved, that overmuch curiosity doth rather deviate a man from concluding anything certainly.

"If thou findest the cusp of the ascendant to fall in the very latter end of a sign, then, doubtless, the querent comes but to tempt thee; or if the question be not radical, if the lord of the ascendant or the hour be not of one triplicity, it signifies the carelessness of the querent, and that he cares not whether you hit or miss."

Among the more remarkable of subsequent medical delusions, were, the cure by sympathy, royal touch, and animal magnetism. Sounder views of medical practice were entertained by degrees; but enough of the old leaven of folly and superstition has, at different times, shown itself, to prove that human nature will never be free from the imputation of lending itself, either from vanity, indolence, or ignorance, to forward

the views of ridiculous or unprincipled empiricism; the disciples of which would, nevertheless, be the first to disbelieve or dispute similar assertions or arguments, when applied to the exercise of other professions or trades.

The first medical delusion which claims our notice is the cure by sympathy. What is now the common method of healing wounds, appeared most unnatural to the surgeons at the end of the seventeenth century; and their legitimate and only cure proved such torture to the unhappy patients, that, in those days, nothing was to be heard in the hospitals, at the time of dressing, but howling and cries. A man proposing the romantic doctrine of adhesion of wounds by union of their edges, would have been despised; but, if he were bold and cunning enough to give an air of incantation to his cures, or declare that they were performed by a secret philosophical sympathy, he was sure of success. No surgeon in Europe ventured to unite wounds directly, without pretending to have learned, from some Eastern sage, or to have discovered, by abstruse studies in philosophy and alchemy, a sympathetic or philosophical mode of cure.

The first inventor of the sympathetic powder was the celebrated Paracelsus, and the Paracelsian doctors flourished in England when Dr. Charleton wrote his ternary of paradoxes, chiefly on the magnetic or attractive power of wounds. This fanaticism lasted no short time, and was hardly to be paralleled, except by the study of the perpetual elixir, and the universal solvent.

Sir Kenelm Digby, secretary to Charles I., was driven into exile during the civil wars. In a discourse upon the cure by sympathy, pronounced at Montpelier before an assembly of nobles and learned men,

he gave the curious case of Mr. Howell, who whilst endeavouring to part two of his friends who were fighting, had his hand cut to the bone. Sir Kenelm was applied to for assistance. "I told him," says he, "I would willingly serve him; but if, haply, he knew the manner how I would cure him, without touching or seeing him, it may be he would not expose himself to my manner of curing, because he would think it, peradventure, either ineffectual or superstitious." He replied, "The wonderful things which many have related unto me of your way of medicinement makes me nothing doubt at all of its efficacy; and all that I have to say unto you is comprehended in the Spanish proverb—Hagase el milagro y hagalo Mahoma—Let the miracle be done, though Mahomet do it."

"I asked him then for any thing that had the blood upon it; so he presently sent for his garter, wherewith his hand was first bound, and dissolving some vitriol in a basin of water, I put in the garter, observing in the interim what Mr. Howell did. He suddenly started, as if he had found some strange alteration in himself. I asked him what he ailed? 'I know not what ails me, but I find that I feel no more pain; methinks that a pleasing kind of freshness, as it were a wet cold napkin, did spread over my hand, which hath taken away the inflammation that tormented me before.' I replied, 'Since then that you feel already so good effect of my medicament, I advise you to cast away all your plaisters, only *keep the wound clean*, and in a moderate temper betwixt heat and cold.' To be brief there was no sense of pain afterward; but within five or six days the wounds were cicatrized and entirely healed."

The King obtained from Sir Kenelm the dis-

eovery of his secret, which he pretended had been taught him by a Carmelite friar, who had learned it in Armenia or Persia.

The fact was, the sympathetical physician understood the cure of wounds by adhesion more perfectly than others ; but it was necessary to cheat the world into this safe method of cure, and they declined the use of it altogether when they foresaw, from the nature of the wound, it could not succeed. The public opinion would have been so strong against any open innovation, that the sympathetic doctors got credit for something like witchcraft, and condescended to dress axes and swords, that the wounds might have leave to lie at rest till they healed. All cures by adhesion were mysteriously performed, and one in particular called the secret dressing, in which great pains were taken, before laying the lips of the wound together, to suck out all the blood. This was chiefly used by drummers in regiments, to conceal the quarrels of the soldiers.

The trick of this way of cure consisted in making grimaces and contortions, signing their patients with the cross, and muttering between their teeth some unintelligible jargon. Their care was to keep the profession among themselves, and it was from the profanation of the sign of the cross that there arose a hot war between the priests and the suckers; the former refusing confession, extreme unction, or any sacrament to those who had undergone the magical or diabolical ceremonies of the suckers, who, on the other hand, refused to suck those connected in any way with the priests, being anxious to preserve their trade, which was not without its emoluments ; for Verdue observes that they were still more skilful in sucking gold than blood.

The "Vulnerary Powder, and Tincture of the Sulphur of Venus," performed wonders, one of which Dr. Colebatch relates of a Mr. Pool, who was run through the body with a sword, and lost four quarts of blood. The medicines being applied, the bleeding stopped; on the following day he "was gnawing tough ill-boiled mutton," and drank a quart of ale; and in the course of five days he returned to duty in the camp. "A Mr. Cherry also, serjeant of grenadiers at the attack of the castle of Namur, was wounded in twenty-six places, twenty-three with bullets, and three large cuts on the head with a sword. He lay forty-eight hours stripped naked upon the breach, without a bit of bread or drop of drink, or any thing done to his wounds; yet this man was cured by the vulnerary powder and tincture alone, and never had any fever*."

The materials of the sympathetic powder were more heterogeneous and horrid than those which the witches used to drop into the caldron; human fat, human blood, mummy, the moss that grows in dead men's sculls, or hogs' brains; and the chief schism among the great masters of the sympathetic school, arose from the question, whether it was necessary that the moss should grow absolutely *in* the scull of the thief who had hung on the gallows, and whether

* Mr. Matthews, the comedian, in his "Humours of a Country Fair," has hardly exaggerated, in describing a quack thus reading acknowledgments from those cured by his specific. 'Sir,—I was cut in two in a saw-pit, and cured by one bottle.' 'Sir,—By the bursting of a powder-mill, I was blown into ten thousand *anatomies*. The first bottle of your incomparable collected all the parts together; the second restored life and animation—before the third was finished, I was in my usual state of health.' This hardly exceeds a reasonable satire on the presumptuous promises that *still* frequently accompany each bottle or box, licensed from *the Stamp Office!*

the medicine, while compounding, was to be stirred with a murderer's knife!

Some, anxious to avoid the damnable charges which were urged against this practice, defended it on philosophical principles, and from the analogy of other natural operations. Any lute, said they, being tuned in unison with another, is affected when the other is struck; the magnet turns by sympathy to the Pole, amber attracts light bodies, loadstones hung to the breast make us cheerful and merry, and the wearing of jewels secures chastity.

All acknowledged sympathetic cures were successful, and the established surgeons of that day refused to practise the treatment, only because it was impious and unlawful; for, said they, how can we contradict matters of fact?

We come now to the second of the great medical delusions, that which attributed to the royal touch a sanative power in scrofulous cases. This is supposed to have been a monkish invention, to increase the reverence for kings, and was practised in England and France.

Becket, a writer in the time of Charles II., fully describes the royal gift of touching for the evil, which gift had been confirmed and continued for six hundred and forty years. It is proved out of Corinthians I., chap. xii., ver. 9. "To another the gift of healing by the same Spirit," and they must needs be allowed no good subjects who dared deny this sanative faculty, when so many thousands had received benefit!

Clovis I., the fifth king of France, who reigned about five hundred years after the birth of Christ, is reputed to have been the first who had the gift of curing this disease. William of Malmesbury states, that Edward the Confessor was the first in England

who healed strumous patients by the touch. Dr. Plott describes a piece of gold of this monarch, found in St. Giles's Fields, near Oxford, having E. C. over the head, as well as two small holes through it by which it was hung on a riband, and used at the ceremony of touching for the evil. Some have considered this gift as the most efficacious part of the cure; some imagined that the success was principally owing to the sign of the cross made on the swellings.

The power of healing by the royal touch does not seem to have been very frequently practised till the time of Charles I. and II., after which it almost ceased.

Mr. Evelyn gives a full description of the ceremony. "His majesty (says he) began to touch for the evil according to custom, thus:—His Majesty sitting under his state in the Banqueting House, the chirurgeons cause the sick to be brought or led up to the throne, where, they kneeling, the king strokes their faces or cheeks with both his hands at once, at which instant a chaplain, in his formalities, says, 'He put his hands upon them and he healed them:' this is said to every one in particular. When they have all been touched they come up again in the same order, and the other chaplain kneeling, and having angels of gold strung on white ribands on his arm, delivers them one by one to his majesty, who puts them about the necks of the touched as they pass, whilst the first chaplain repeats, 'That is the true light who came into the world.' Then follows an Epistle with the Liturgy, and prayers for the sick with some alteration; lastly the blessing. Then the lord chamberlain and comptroller of the household bring a bason, ewer, and towel, for his majesty to wash. John Bird says the king expresses his belief in the cure being effected through the grace

of God, saying, at the time of the ceremony, 'I touch, God heals.'"

One of the historians of the royal touch gives a numerical table of the number of persons touched by Charles II., from May 1660 to 1680, distinguishing the exact number of each year; the grand total amounts to the incredible number of ninety-two thousand one hundred and seven, at the average of twelve every day!

Others, besides those of royal extraction, set up pretensions of curing certain diseases by touch. The seventh sons of seventh sons had a more than usual virtue inherent in them. But the one who attracted public attention most, was Mr. Valentine Greatrakes, called, *par excellence*, "The Stroker." He was an Irish gentleman, and came to England, invited by the Earl of Orrery, to cure the Viscountess Conway of an inveterate headache; and though he failed in that attempt, he is said to have wrought many surprising cures, not unlike miracles. He was born in 1628, seemed very religious, his looks grave but simple. He had felt a strange persuasion, or impulse, that he had the gift of curing the evil, which suggestion becoming very strong, he stroked several persons and cured them. During an epidemical fever, he cured all who came to him, his power of curing extending over divers maladies. He performed such extraordinary cures that he was cited into the Bishop's Court, at Lismore, for not having a license to practise. He arrived in England in 1666; and as he proceeded through the country, magistrates of the cities and towns through which he passed begged him to come and cure their sick. Having arrived in London, he every day went to a particular part, where a prodigious number of

sick of all ranks and both sexes assembled. His fame did not last, however. He returned to Ireland in 1667, and lived many years, but no longer kept up the reputation of performing strange cures. On the strictest inquiry, no sort of blemish was ever thrown on his character.

A Mr. Morley wrote on the virtues of the vervain root, as an effectual cure for scrofula. "I recommend," says he, "a piece of the root of common purple vervain, fresh, about three or four inches long, all the fibres to be cut off, and it is to be always worn at the pit of the stomach, tied with one yard of white satin riband half-inch wide; no other colour is proper, because the dye may be prejudicial."

It is the fate of all useful discoveries or improvements to meet with bigoted or interested opposition from those who would willingly remain in the beaten path of habit, rather than acknowledge any change to be profitable.

That most important discovery of the circulation of the blood by Harvey was at first furiously opposed, and was *proved*, according to the laws of hydraulics, to be both impossible and absurd; yet when it was in vain to dispute the fact, it was undervalued, as one *almost* known long before!

Inoculation, it is well known, as a means of rendering small-pox less severe, was introduced into England by Lady Mary Wortley Montague, who had frequent opportunities of seeing the operation performed, when residing at Constantinople with her husband, the English ambassador there. She was so thoroughly convinced of the safety of this practice, that she resolved to submit her only son to it; a boy about six years of age. The operation succeeded perfectly; this happened in 1717. After her return to England,

she set the first and great example, by having her little girl, then five years old, also inoculated.

Mr. C. Maitland, who had accompanied the family of Mr. Wortley, and had inoculated the son and daughter of that gentleman, performed the operation, by royal command, on six condemned criminals at Newgate, in the presence of several eminent physicians and surgeons, and they all did well. Mr. Maitland, however, was not prepared to find this species infectious, and was much surprised that the disorder was caught by six servants, who were wont to hug and caress a little child, sick of the inoculated disease.

So great a novelty as the inoculation of a disease, produced much astonishment and dread, and it was opposed professionally and theologically. Mr. Edmund Massey preached a sermon, at St. Andrew's, Holborn, July 8, 1722, against the dangerous and sinful practice of inoculation. His text was Job, chap. ii. v. 7, "So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils, from the sole of his foot unto his crown." From this text he argued that the disease with which Job was smitten was neither more nor less than the confluent small-pox. "With this view, I shall not," said he, "scruple to call it a *diabolical* operation, usurping an authority founded neither in nature nor religion. This practice also tends to promote vice and immorality, inasmuch as it diminishes the salutary terror which prevails respecting the uncertain approach of the disease."

Inoculation has doubtless been of infinite benefit to society, but it is now superseded by a much greater improvement, namely, that of vaccination. This is, beyond all comparison, the most valuable and the most important discovery ever made; it strikes out one of the worst in the catalogue of human evils; it

annihilates a disease which has ever been considered as the most dreadful scourge of mankind.

Dr. Edward Jenner, the inventor of vaccination, was born in Gloucestershire, in 1749, and being educated for the medical profession, was placed under the immediate tuition of Mr. John Hunter, with whom he lived two years as a house pupil. After finishing his studies in London, he settled at Berkeley. His inquiry into the nature of cow-pox commenced about the year 1776. His attention to this singular disease was first excited by observing, that among those whom he inoculated for the small-pox many were insusceptible of that disorder. These persons, he was informed, had undergone the casual cow-pox, which had been known in the dairies from time immemorial, and a vague opinion prevailed that it was a preventive of the small-pox. He instituted a series of experiments, and several persons were successively inoculated from each other with vaccine matter, and then exposed to the infection of small-pox, which they all resisted. When these facts were communicated to the world envy assailed his fame, his discovery was depreciated, then denied. Truth, however, ultimately prevailed, vaccination obtained a complete triumph, and the foes of Jenner and humanity were covered with confusion. Dr. Mosely, one of his opponents, asks if any person can say, "What may be the consequences of introducing a *bestial humor* into the human frame, after a long lapse of years?" He was asked, in return, "What may be the consequences, after a long lapse of years, of introducing into the human frame cow's milk, beefsteaks, or a mutton chop?" Dr. Jenner had numerous presents of plate, &c., honours were conferred on him by different societies; and a grant of ten thousand pounds was voted to him by Parliament.

The phenomena of Animal Magnetism, when announced to the world, excited the greatest sensation on the Continent, particularly in France; for some years the subject filled their "Journals" and "Mercuries," and employed some of their best pens and brightest wits.

M. Mesmer, the inventor, was a native of Switzerland, of great talents, but enthusiastic fancy. He undertook to defend the old doctrine of the influence of the planets on the human frame, and he searched for some means of communication between them. Electricity did not answer his expectations, and he turned his attention to magnetism. Iron becomes magnetic after being rubbed with a magnet; he therefore rubbed the human body with the loadstone. The phenomena which resulted he attributed, at first, to the magnetic influence; but experience proved to him that the application of the bare hand produced the same effect, yet he called this animal magnetism.

M. Loewe, a supporter, says, "On a certain application of the palm of the hand and tips of the fingers, made by the magnetiser, without, however, touching the person, or even at the distance of two or three inches, the magnetised individual feels an increase of warmth, at times a chilliness or uneasiness within him, particularly near the pit of the stomach. After repeated applications, the eyelids become heavy, and the patient falls into a sleep, from which he cannot be aroused by a sense of hearing, or by any other of the external organs of sense. There was one instance of a magnetised person, who had only occasion to enter the house of the magnetiser, in order to fall into a profound and magnetical sleep. A very rare result of this state is that of clairvoyance, when it has been observed, that the internal sense seems to present

itself wholly unconfined, and all nature appears to be disclosed to it; the body being as it were completely numbed, eyelids open, pulse soft and hardly perceptible, the countenance is transformed, and exhibits the picture of innocence. They are in fervent prayer to the Creator, or perhaps they describe scenes and pastimes at the antipodes. A female, who had never been in America, and had never read geographical descriptions, described that continent, its inhabitants, &c., very accurately."

Meeting with but little encouragement in Germany, Mesmer went to France, where he was exceedingly successful. His cures were numerous, and of the most astonishing nature. He was obliged to form a number of pupils, under his inspection, to administer his process. His house at Creteil was crowded with patients, and a numerous company was daily assembled at his house at Paris, where the operation was publicly performed.

One evening, M. Mesmer walked with six persons in the gardens of the Prince de Soubise. He performed a magnetical operation upon a tree, and a little after, three ladies of the company fainted away. The duchess, the only remaining lady, supported herself upon the tree, without being able to quit it. The Count of ———, unable to stand, was obliged to throw himself upon a bench. The effects upon M. A———, a gentleman of muscular frame, were more terrible; and M. Mesmer's servant, who was summoned to remove the bodies, and who was inured to these scenes, found himself unable to move. The whole company were obliged to remain in this situation for a considerable time.

The public method of magnetising was performed in a large room, in the centre of which stood a circular

under the superintendence of Dr. Perkins, for a time produced a sensation equally extraordinary in England; but it was satisfactorily proved that the imagination of the patient alone gave virtue to the tractors. Dr. Thornton found a wooden skewer had all the power of the tractors in removing pain when clandestinely used instead of them.

The Baron Silverkielm, of Uleáteog, in Finland, was a great proficient in Mesmerism. He imagined the souls of those magnetically asleep were translated to the regions above, where the souls of the departed were all dressed in white robes, and enjoyed constant scenes of delight. He would interrogate the sleepers, concerning the white robes, Paradise, and the Elysian Fields. He was also desirous to receive intelligence from his ancestors, and, in general, they very kindly sent him their compliments by the mouths of the couriers in white jackets.

By directly attacking the imagination, did Mr. Loutherbourg cure vast numbers of patients. He became impressed with the idea that he had a commission from above to cure diseases, and his door was soon crowded with patients all day. Amongst others, a respectable man, from the country, had been afflicted with great pains and swellings, particularly about the loins, so that he could not walk across the room. On entering, Mr. Loutherbourg looked steadfastly at him, and said, "I know your complaint, sir, look at me." They continued looking at each other some minutes; then Mr. L. asked, if he did not feel some warmth at his loins. The man replied that he did. "Then you will feel in a few minutes much greater warmth." After a short pause, the man said, "I feel as if a person was pouring boiling water upon me." Still looking him in the face, Mr. L. said, "How

did you come here, sir ?" "In a coach." "Then go and discharge your coach, and walk back to town" (from Hammersmith Terrace, where Mr. L. resided). The coach was discharged, and the patient walked to town and next day he walked five hours about town without fatigue. He offered ten pounds; but Mr. L. would not take a farthing.

The easy manner in which people have become a prey to illiterate and dangerous pretenders, in the medical art, has been long known. Many thousand volumes would attest the truth of this observation, which has been often repeated. Cotta, in 1612, says, "There is no place or person ignorant how all sorts of vile people and unskilful persons, without restraint, make gainful traffic by botching in physic; and hereby numbers of unwotting innocents daily enthrall and betray themselves to sustain the riot of their enemies and common *homicides*." The late Dr. Buchan exclaimed, "As matters stand at present, it is easier to cheat a man out of his life than a shilling, and almost impossible to detect or punish the offender." The case is still the same.

Uroscopy, or water-casting, was once very much practised, and those who professed to cure diseases by such inspection, simply, were consulted by all classes of persons. The absurdity of these pretensions was forcibly exposed by Dr. Radcliffe, on the following occasion. A shoemaker's wife applied to him to relieve her husband, who was very ill, presenting him with a phial of his water for inspection. The doctor exchanged the contents, and bade her take that back, and tell her husband to make a pair of shoes, by the same instructions.

A Dr. Meyersbach started, about 1770, as a water doctor; he had arrived from Germany in a starving

under the superintendence of Dr. Perkins, for a time produced a sensation equally extraordinary in England; but it was satisfactorily proved that the imagination of the patient alone gave virtue to the tractors. Dr. Thornton found a wooden skewer had all the power of the tractors in removing pain when clandestinely used instead of them.

The Baron Silverkielm, of Uleáteog, in Finland, was a great proficient in Mesmerism. He imagined the souls of those magnetically asleep were translated to the regions above, where the souls of the departed were all dressed in white robes, and enjoyed constant scenes of delight. He would interrogate the sleepers, concerning the white robes, Paradise, and the Elysian Fields. He was also desirous to receive intelligence from his ancestors, and, in general, they very kindly sent him their compliments by the mouths of the couriers in white jackets.

By directly attacking the imagination, did Mr. Loutherbourg cure vast numbers of patients. He became impressed with the idea that he had a commission from above to cure diseases, and his door was soon crowded with patients all day. Amongst others, a respectable man, from the country, had been afflicted with great pains and swellings, particularly about the loins, so that he could not walk across the room. On entering, Mr. Loutherbourg looked steadfastly at him, and said, "I know your complaint, sir, look at me." They continued looking at each other some minutes; then Mr. L. asked, if he did not feel some warmth at his loins. The man replied that he did. "Then you will feel in a few minutes much greater warmth." After a short pause, the man said, "I feel as if a person was pouring boiling water upon me." Still looking him in the face, Mr. L. said, "How

did you come here, sir ?" "In a coach." "Then go and discharge your coach, and walk back to town" (from Hammersmith Terrace, where Mr. L. resided). The coach was discharged, and the patient walked to town and next day he walked five hours about town without fatigue. He offered ten pounds; but Mr. L. would not take a farthing.

The easy manner in which people have become a prey to illiterate and dangerous pretenders, in the medical art, has been long known. Many thousand volumes would attest the truth of this observation, which has been often repeated. Cotta, in 1612, says, "There is no place or person ignorant how all sorts of vile people and unskilful persons, without restraint, make gainful traffic by botching in physic; and hereby numbers of unwotting innocents daily enthrall and betray themselves to sustain the riot of their enemies and common *homicides*." The late Dr. Buchan exclaimed, "As matters stand at present, it is easier to cheat a man out of his life than a shilling, and almost impossible to detect or punish the offender." The case is still the same.

Uroscopy, or water-casting, was once very much practised, and those who professed to cure diseases by such inspection, simply, were consulted by all classes of persons. The absurdity of these pretensions was forcibly exposed by Dr. Radcliffe, on the following occasion. A shoemaker's wife applied to him to relieve her husband, who was very ill, presenting him with a phial of his water for inspection. The doctor exchanged the contents, and bade her take that back, and tell her husband to make a pair of shoes, by the same instructions.

A Dr. Meyersbach started, about 1770, as a water doctor; he had arrived from Germany in a starving

state, and was first an ostler at a riding-school. Not making money fast enough, he set up as a doctor, and was consulted by all classes. Dr. Lettsom took great pains to expose the ignorance and knavery of Meyersbach, whose violent medicines, if they sometimes cured, more often aggravated, his patients' sufferings. It is believed that he acquired a good fortune, with which he retired to his native country.

Le Fevre, another German, a broken wine-merchant, set up for a gout doctor, and was much noticed by the nobility. Under pretence of going to Germany for more of his powders, he quitted this country, and had the prudence never to return. He carried over above ten thousand guineas, obtained by subscription and otherwise. Living in the style of a prince, he drank daily, as his first toast, "To the credulous and stupid nobility, gentry, and opulent merchants, of Great Britain."

Calculous disorders are so painful in general, that people suffering from such causes eagerly fly to what promises relief. Many specifics for this disease, lithontriptics as they were called, had their day. In 1771, a Dr. Chittick advertised such a remedy, and made use of a very unusual expedient to keep it secret. He would not intrust it to any one unmixed. The vehicle in which it was to be taken was weak veal broth, which was sent him from day to day. Each of his patients sent him three pints of broth in a tin bottle, padlocked, to prevent curious persons from prying, the doctor and patient each having a key. His terms were two guineas a week, regularly paid, besides which he expected a considerable premium for his pains. Mr. Blackrie, who exposed this species of fraud, detected by analysis a solution of alkaline salts and quicklime; yet the

doctor greatly exclaimed against the use of those salts, as highly mischievous.

A Mrs. Joanna Stephens was the proprietor of a lithontriptic, which for a long time had a great repute, and was even thought worthy the attention of parliament, who voted her five thousand pounds for making known the composition of it, a favourable report of its efficacy having been given by the gentlemen who were appointed trustees to examine into its pretensions. Subsequent experience has shown that it is not so well adapted to the ends proposed, being a medley of soap and ill-prepared alkaline substances, very nauseous and oppressive to the stomach.

The recent and valuable discovery of lithotrity, now practised by Baron Heurteloup and others, namely, the application of mechanical power for the destruction of the stone, without the use of the knife, is likely to be of more signal advantage than internal remedies, and, though it is candidly stated by its supporters not to be applicable in every case, yet it may frequently be performed without either pain or inconvenience.

The Anodyne necklace, which was the result of some ridiculous superstition respecting the efficacy of Sir Hugh's bones, is still gravely offered for sale, to facilitate the cutting of the teeth. In 1717, a "philosophical treatise" was published, wherein it says, "The effluvia and atoms, driven off by the heat of the body, bear such a tendency to the ailing part, as the loadstone does to iron, and that they will never leave off acting till they have given ease, and consequently it is a thing most capable of curing sympathetically the diseases of the human body, of anything in the whole world. Since this famed necklace has

been published, the bills of mortality have so decreased, as to be less than ever they have been known to be."

But the *summum bonum*, with which this series of medical deceptions may appropriately be closed, was the "universal medicine, or virtues of the magnetical antimonial cup, addressed to the houses of parliament by John Evans, minister and preacher of God's word. It is warranted to be alone the phœnix and miracle of all physical miracles: the elixir of life, balsam of nature. It containeth mystically and essentially the quintessence of all minerals and vegetables, and magnetically sympathiseth with all animals."

In spite, however, of such admirable *never-failing* specifics, which, it would seem, ought to have exterminated every malady from the face of the earth, diseases, hydra-headed, still baffle their assailants, and return to the charge with renewed force and provoking obstinacy. But the matter is too serious for the subject of a joke. If even practitioners who have conscientiously studied their profession are unavoidably in some degree open to the old charge of "pouring medicines, of which they know little, into a body of which they know less," what must be said, or what ought to be the punishment, of such villanous pretenders as those who have been described in this chapter,—men without talent or education, and who seem to think that, like charity, impudence covers a multitude of sins!

THE END.

LONDON:
BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.



